

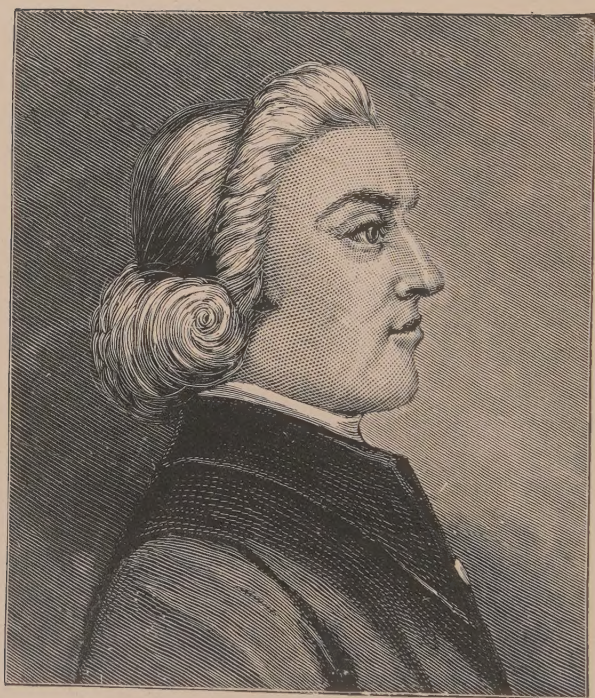
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L. D. Jones

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LIFE OF
HOWELL HARRIS



HOWELL HARRIS.

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THE WELSH REFORMER.

BY

HUGH J. HUGHES,

AUTHOR OF "MEMOIR OF DAVID HOWELL."

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PREFACE.

THE History of MR. HOWELL HARRIS is invested with a peculiar charm. He possessed qualities that entitle him to rank with the most heroic and saintly Reformers. The present work was taken in hand with the object of exhibiting those qualities more fully than has hitherto been done ; and it is now sent forth with a prayer that it may in some measure accomplish the one purpose that overshadowed every other in the penning of every line.

HUGH J. HUGHES.

*Cefncoed, Merthyr Tydvil,
June, 1892.*

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CORRECTIONS.

ON page 51, after the words "Rev. David Williams," let the words "another dissenting minister" be omitted; and again on page 78 it is made to appear that the Vicar of Machynlleth and his brother were the clergyman and attorney mentioned on the preceding page,—whereas the clergyman Mr. HARRIS complains of was Griffiths, Penegoes, and the profane attorney Mr. Lewis Hughes (see "*Cymru*," v. i. p. 22). In addition to the foregoing, there are two or three printer's errors, such as the substitution of one letter for another, or the insertion of a redundant letter, which escaped notice in the revision of the proof sheets.

LIFE OF HOWELL HARRIS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE of the proverbs of the Principality of which the subject of our history was a native runs to the effect that all nations have their brave men. The character of the renown these brave men acquire will depend upon the nature of the sphere in which their labours are exerted ; and frequently, if not always, derives its tone as much from the exigencies of the time in which their lot has been cast as from the individual temperament of the men themselves.

Since the fall of their last brave Prince, Llewelyn, the military genius of the Cymry has found no national expression for itself, and indeed no expression at all except so far as the fighting portion of the Principality have given vent to their ardour under the banners of their conquerors, the English. Nor has the country for an almost equally long period been possessed of separate political organisations. Ecclesiastically, however, the case has been different. About a century and a half from the time we write, the heart of the nation was roused to such a pitch of religious fervour that from then till now the Welsh have been known, so far as they are known at all, as a people of extreme religious enthusiasm. The brave men of Wales have been, therefore, for the most part,

men of religion; and to the extent their names and labours have become identified with the aspirations of their people, aspirations which they themselves were the means of awakening, their courage has been displayed in the ranks of religious activity.

Foremost amongst the men of this class, and towering head and shoulders above all who went before or have come after, stands the name of Howell Harris. To him the movement alluded to owes its origin, and from the time he first appeared upon the stage with his fire and indomitable zeal, the awakening of the nation takes its date. He stands, therefore, pre-eminent amongst the benefactors of his country, and the very sound of his name has become amongst the people of his own nation the synonym for all that is brave and unconquerable, and of the nature of true heroism. It would not be an exaggeration to say that children have been spell-bound by the narratives of his gigantic deeds, that old men have lingered with fondness upon the memory of his fame, and that young men have pressed forward by the score to swell the ranks of the gospel ministry, excited to ambition and emulation, and supported amidst the difficulties of their calling, by the charms of his matchless renown.

Howell Harris, in fact, has been looked upon by the Welsh people as the special creation of the Almighty, he has been regarded as a comet flashed out suddenly into the darkness of a midnight sky; he is the Luther of Wales, the Elijah of the Principality, sent forth to level the fortifications of darkness, and himself as an army of chariots and horsemen to mow down the devotees of sin. None of his successors have been worthy to compare with him; and as for his predecessors, the popular imagination is so filled with Harris's own dimensions that none of them are seen. Religious activity in Wales begins with him, and on the other side of him in the past the religious history of the nation sinks precipitately down into a dead monotonous plain. The late lamented Dr. Thomas

Rees, after labouring himself under the same erroneous views for many years,* has done much to dispel this misapprehension, and in his popular work, "The History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," has marshalled before us, irrespective of the worthies of the Episcopal fold, a grand array of earnest and successful men who flourished before the time of Harris. Yet even Dr. Rees has failed to discover the reformer that can obscure the popularity of the subject of our remarks, and in spite of a trifling partiality for the sect to which he himself belonged,—a fault, by the way, to which all are liable,—has been constrained to leave the primacy in undisputed possession with the founder of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism, by the admission that he was "the most successful preacher that ever ascended a platform or a pulpit in Wales," and by the further admission, italicised by the Doctor himself, that "*he was an extraordinary instrument raised by Providence, at an extraordinary time, to accomplish an extraordinary work.*"

* "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," 2nd Ed. p. 279.

CHAPTER II.

YOUTH.

HOWELL HARRIS was one of three brothers, the sons of Howell and Susanna Harris, and was born on the spot where the Calvinistic Methodist Theological College stands, at Trevecca, in the parish of Talgarth, Breconshire, on January 23rd, 1714. The family was originally from Carmarthenshire, but settled at Talgarth about the year 1700. Mr. Harris the elder possessed the small tenement at Trevecca where he lived, but was unable to afford his children any education beyond what was elementary. They inherited, however, from him or their mother, a degree of ability supported by the needful persistence that enabled each of the three, while differing from the other in disposition and pursuit, to distinguish himself in his particular sphere, and leave a name that is cherished with pride amongst the annals of their native county.

Joseph Harris, the eldest of the three, was born in the year 1702. When of proper age he was put to learn the trade of a blacksmith; but going early to London, and devoting himself to study, he was fortunate in obtaining a Government appointment at the Mint, and came to be esteemed by the learned and the great in his day. He married one of the daughters and heiresses of Thomas Jones, of Tredustan, Breconshire, by whom he had one only daughter, and died in the Tower of London, September 26th, 1764, aged 62, where his remains are deposited. A monumental tablet erected to his memory in the church at Talgarth mentions

that "his great abilities and unshaken integrity were uniformly directed to the good of his country, having by indefatigable attention gained the greatest proficiency in every branch of scientific knowledge. As an author he published several tracts on different subjects, invented many instruments, monuments of his mathematical genius; yet superior to the love of fame, he forbore having even his name engraven upon them. His political talents were well known to the ministers in power in his days, who failed not to improve on all the wise and learned ideas which greatness of mind, candour, with love of his country, led him to communicate."

Thomas Harris, the second of the brothers, was born in the year 1705. He was brought up to the trade of a tailor. Imitating his brother in wishing to carve out his own fortune, he also made his way to the Metropolis, where he was welcomed, and employed by his uncle, Mr. Solomon Price, a master-tailor; and where, by his industry and jovial nature, he shot forward to prominence in the sartorial profession. He used to make visits to Paris in order to perfect himself in the mysteries of dandyism, and he had a keen scent for every advantage to his business. A humourous adventure is said to have laid the foundation of his success. Mr. Chase, Mr. Price, Mr. Rigby, Mr. Forrester, and some others of the bacchanalian fraternity, had on one occasion refused to go home till morning, and even then were disporting themselves by breaking the windows in Mr. Harris's neighbourhood. Perceiving the advantage of an acquaintance with those gentlemen, "he immediately joined the party in the sport, and assisted them in demolishing his own windows; after which he told them he knew the master of the house they were attacking—that he was a jolly fellow, kept an excellent bottle of wine in his cellar, and that he was determined to compel him to produce it if they would partake. The invitation was accepted; the wine was good, and their associate was discovered to be their host. His good

humour was never forgotten ; from that moment his fortune was made—they not only employed him in his business themselves, but recommended him to their friends, and procured him contracts, by which means in a few years he was able to purchase the estates of Tregunter, Trevecca, and a property around them to the amount of £1000 per annum, or thereabouts ; and here he retired to spend the remainder of his days." He was Sheriff of Breconshire in 1768. The tablet in Talgarth Church, which records the memory of his brother, mentions further that "The remains of Thomas Harris, late of Tregunter in this parish, Esq., lie interred near this spot, who died September 23rd, 1782, aged 77, to the great loss of his neighbourhood, as in him the poor always found a most bountiful benefactor, his heart and mansion being ever open to the feelings of humanity, by relieving the distresses of the indigent."* He devised the Tregunter estate, together with the bulk of his property, to Mrs. Hughes, the only daughter and heiress of his elder brother, Joseph Harris, from whom two of the leading families of the county of Brecknock at the present day are descended.

Howell Harris, the youngest of the three brothers, was destined and educated for the ministry of the Established Church—a stretch of ambition on the part of the father that severely taxed the domestic resources, for when Howell was fifteen years of age his brother Joseph desires to be excused from rendering assistance on the ground that he also was now drained by the enterprise of publishing a book, but promises to do all he can when the returns begin to flow in. The prospect of entering the Church of England ministry was particularly agreeable to the aspirations of young Howell, as affording the allurements of appearing before the world in a public capacity ; but his prospects were suddenly darkened by the death of his father, which took place March

* History of Brecknockshire, by T. Jones, v. ii., p. i., p. 336.

9th, 1730. Deprived by the same bereavement of paternal restraint, and having no serious friend to converse with, the pious reflections he had been more or less accustomed to from childhood gave way to more questionable thoughts, and he was soon carried away by the stream of vanity, pride, and youthful diversion. The gaiety of his manner and appearance within two years from his father's death may be inferred from the following items, which at the beginning of 1732 he enumerates among his expenditures, namely:—pen-knife, peruke, razor, shirt-buttons, cane, buckles, hunting-whip, dancing, comb, seal, gloves, pen-knife, and tooth-pick. He had, however, an habitual conviction which never abandoned him in the midst of his frivolities, and he was wont to record, by a periodical or occasional confession, the faults of which he found himself guilty. This confession, which he began at the age of seventeen, and which covers many scores of closely written pages, is still extant amongst his manuscripts, and is a witness to the fairness of his scholarship, being written in a free and running hand, and with many abbreviations, according to his life-long habit, in the Latin language. His proficiency in this language is further proved by the marks and scorings with which he afterwards used to indicate the progress of his reading in the ponderous tomes of the Latin Fathers that still weigh down the shelves of the library at Trevecca College.

At the age of eighteen he was under the necessity of reducing his learning to practical value for his own maintenance, by opening a school at Trevecca. He continued at this occupation for about two years, when, through enlarged acquaintance with men of influence, and in particular through the kindness of his brother Joseph, the cloud that had settled on his hopes began to disperse, and the prospect began to clear; but before anything definite was arranged, an important event occurred. "While I was thus about entering more publicly on the stage of life," he writes, "many providences

apparently concurring to raise me in the world, and while my corruptions grew thereby stronger and stronger, the Lord was pleased to glorify his free grace in awakening me to a sense of the miserable state I was in, and had been in, though I knew it not."

About the one-and-twentieth year of Howell's age, on March 30th, 1735, being the Sunday before Easter, he was amongst the congregation in the church of his native parish, when the Rev. Pryce Davies, the incumbent, read out the usual warning for the celebration of the Holy Communion on the Sabbath following. Selecting for his exhortation the one appointed to be read in case he should find the people negligent in the observance (an intimation, by the way, that such negligence must have prevailed in the parish), the good clergyman began to use arguments proving the necessity of the Sacrament, and enlarging in the warmth and earnestness of his heart upon the form of words before him, exclaimed, "If you are not fit to come to the Lord's Table, you are not fit to come to church, you are not fit to live, you are not fit to die." Impressed by the solemnity of the words, young Harris began to reflect—formed a resolution to accede to the clergyman's wishes; and as a measure of preparation, thought it needful to sever himself at once from all his outward vanities, and further put his idea into immediate practice by effecting a reconciliation on his way home from Church with a neighbour with whom he was at variance—forgiving his neighbour's fault, and making a frank acknowledgment of all his own. And thus unobtrusively took place the beginning of the change in the life of one of the most successful instruments for producing similar changes in others that the Church of God in Wales has ever known. But it was only the beginning, and consisted so far of nothing but the resolve to amend the outward life, without any knowledge whatever of the need of an internal change to render the outward possible and permanent. "I knew not where to begin," he says, "or what to do."

The following Sunday he appeared at the Church again; but in repeating the confession,—“We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable,”—there suddenly darted to his mind the conviction that his inward experience corresponded not with the gravity of the acknowledgment he was making: he found *no* inward grief at the remembrance of his sins, nor was their burden a heavy weight to his soul.

“I was convinced,” he says, “that it ought to be so; and finding it was not so, I perceived I was going to the Lord’s Table with a lie in my mouth, and was much inclined to withdraw, but quieted my mind with having *determined* to lead a new life; and in that resolution I received the pledges of God’s dying love. I then began to be more thoughtful and serious—was given to prayer, and strove to keep my heart and thoughts fixed on the Lord, but all in vain. Thus I went on for about a fortnight, until I almost lost my conviction. Providence, on the 20th of April, put a book in my hands, and I looked into the latter part of it as a help to self-examination; as soon as I began to read I was convinced that in every branch of my duty to my God, to myself, and to my neighbour, I had fallen short, and was guilty. I met the same evening with another book, written by Bryan Duppa,* on the Commandments, which made my conviction somewhat deeper. The more I read, the greater did the spiritual light shine into my mind; discovering the extent of the law of God, calling me to account not only for outward

* Bryan Duppa, or Dupha, or De Uphuagh; born at Lewisham, March 10, 1588; died as Bishop of Winchester, 1662.—*Mackenzie’s Imp. Dict. Univ. Biog.*, vol. i., pp. 170, 180. *Enwogion y Ffydd*, iii. 179.

gross sins, but for my looks, aims, and deeds—in all I had thought, said, or done. Then I saw clearly that if I was to be judged by *that* law, I was undone for ever.

“The more I searched into the nature of things, the more I saw myself and others with whom I conversed to be on the broad road to destruction. I found myself to be void of spiritual life, ‘carnal, and sold under sin.’ I felt that I could no more believe, or mourn for my sins, than I could ascend to heaven. I then began to humble myself by fasting and by denying myself almost every temporal comfort, hoping thus to subdue the power of inward depravity. But as yet I knew nothing of the inward self-denial our Saviour enjoins, and I was ignorant of the blood of Christ as the only ‘Fountain opened for sin,’ and a total stranger to the life of faith; and therefore I was all the while in a lost state, and in danger of final destruction. Thus having no foundation I knew not the Saviour’s voice, till one day in prayer I felt a strong impression on my mind to give myself to God as I was, and to leave all to follow Him. But presently I felt a strong opposition to it, backed with reasons that if I would give myself to the Lord I should lose my liberty, and would then be not my own, or in my own power; but after a great conflict for some time I was made willing to bid adieu to all things temporal, and choose the Lord for my portion. I believe I was then effectually called to be a follower of the Lord, and had some inward satisfaction in my soul, but had no evidence of my acceptance with God till the following Whit-Sunday at the Sacrament.”

CHAPTER III.

CONFLICT.

WHEN the following Whit-Sunday above alluded to, which was May 25th, 1735, arrived, the dread of uttering a falsehood in the presence of the Omniscient, by confessing to a sorrow which he knew was not real, had given place to another and more truthful experience. He had read in the meantime in a book, "that if he went to the sacrament simply believing in the Lord Jesus Christ he would receive the forgiveness of all his sins;" and as the remembrance of those sins had now become truly grievous and the burden of them really intolerable, he put his trust in the Redeemer who had borne the burden in his place, was acquitted at the bar of justice and in his own conscience, and had the satisfaction of finding the evidence of his change in the true faith and peace, joy and watchfulness, hatred to sin and fear of offending God, that followed from it.

"I was then," he writes, "delivered from a grievous temptation that had followed me ever since I had first given myself to the Lord. Before that time I never knew what *inward* trials and *spiritual* conflicts were, only now and then I had some uneasiness from an awakened conscience, which was quite different from those sore trials that I bore from atheistical thoughts that made my life a burden to me; for they came with such force and power on my mind that I could not withstand them. But at the *Sacrament*, by viewing my God on the cross, I was delivered from these temptations; now the world, and all thought of human applause and preferment,

were quite vanished from my sight ; the spiritual world and eternity began, though as yet faintly, to appear ; now I began to have other views and motives different from what I had ; I felt some insatiable desires after the salvation of poor sinners ; my heart longed for their being convinced of their sin and misery. I also found myself a stranger here ; all my heart was drawn from the world and visible things, and was in pursuit of more valuable riches. I now began to be more happy, and could not help telling in going home from Church that Whit-Sunday that I knew my sins were forgiven me ; though I had never heard anyone make that confession before, or say it could be obtained ; but I was so deeply convinced that nothing could shake my assurance of it. However, I knew not whether I should continue in that state, having never conversed with any that had his face towards Zion, and who could instruct me in the ways of the Lord. This, however, was the cry of my soul—‘ Now or never ! If God leaves thee now, and thou stiflest these convictions and blessings, thou art undone for ever ! ’ This fear of losing what I had then, kept me fasting, praying, and watching continually. Though I had peace with God, yet I was apprehensive of seeing any of my old companions, lest I should grow cold again. This also induced me to keep close to God in all duties, and to keep a strict watch over my spirit, heart, and lips ; dreading all lightness of mind, and idle words, and foolish jesting, which I was so prone to by nature.”

“ June 18th, 1735. Being in secret prayer, I felt suddenly my heart melting within me, like wax before the fire, with love to God my Saviour ; and also felt, not only love and peace, but a longing to be dissolved and be with Christ, and there was a cry in my inmost soul which I was totally unacquainted with before, ‘ Abba, Father ! Abba, Father ! ’ I could not help calling God my Father ; I *knew* that I was His child, and that He loved me and heard me. My soul being filled and satiated, cried, ‘ It is enough ; I am satisfied. Give

me strength, and I will follow Thee through fire and water ! ' I could say I was happy indeed ! There was in me a well of water springing up to everlasting life ; and the love of God was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost.

" Being still ignorant of God's method of bringing the lost sons of Adam home to Himself, I did not know in scripture terms what I had now received ; neither did I long retain this immediate fruition of God by His Spirit ; for as I still kept school, waiting for my call from a near relative to go to Oxford, I felt some risings of anger in my heart towards one of the children. The enemy immediately accused me, and alleged that I had now forfeited all my happiness which I had just before enjoyed, and that I was fallen from grace, and therefore in a worse condition than ever. This gave me no small pain and confusion, and whilst I was in this agony, hating myself entirely for sinning against this good God, the Saviour of sinners, and grieving on account of the loss of that felicity I had enjoyed, I was ready to despond ; but God pitied me, and sent that word home to my soul, " I CHANGE NOT." That such words were scriptural I knew not, and was at a loss how to apply them to myself, until light broke in upon my soul to show me that my salvation did not depend upon my own faithfulness, but on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ ; so that though I was subject to change, yet because of His unchangeableness I was secure. Then was I entirely freed from all my fears, and found uninterrupted rest in the love and faithfulness of God my Saviour.

" I was all this while a total stranger to all controversies about religion ; I only knew this, that God loved me, and would love me for His own name's sake freely to the end. This made me love Him again, and study how to show my love to Him. I cannot express the comfort I now enjoyed in my soul, being continually favoured with the Divine presence, and having my conversation in heaven. Now I could talk of nothing but spiritual things, which soon brought contempt

upon me; I was daily derided by some and pitied by others; some strove to terrify me, and others to allure me with counsel that savoured too much of the wisdom of this world to have any weight with me. All my study was now to show my gratitude to my God. But it grieved me still that I had neither seen nor heard of any in the country who seemed in earnest to work out his own salvation, or to have any saving knowledge of God in Christ; though I did not then so much as imagine that I should be useful, seeing not the least probability of it, but rather the contrary.

“I had frequent thoughts of hiding myself from my friends, dreading nothing more than to be known in the world. This made me actually drop my acquaintance with all ranks of people, and to reject offers that were made to raise my fortune in the world. I sold what I had and gave it to the poor, and amongst the rest such clothes as I thought too gay for a Christian. I saw by reading the Scriptures how dreadful it was not to take God at His word, and then I had power to rely entirely on His promise: ‘And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My name’s sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.’ Upon this promise I resigned my body and soul to His care for ever.

“From that time to the present I can say that my life has been a life of faith, pleading with Him that I wholly depended on His blessed promises. I daily find Him to be faithful, and they that trust in Him shall not be ashamed. But this appears as enthusiasm to flesh and blood; though we call God our Father, own Him to be the disposer of all things, and acknowledge that His word is truth; yet we will not give Him that credit which we give to mortal, unfaithful man. This indeed appeared dreadful to me, and therefore I was determined to trust for ever on His blessed promise for my temporal blessings, as it is all my trust for eternal life. Thus in all my wants I had nowhere to apply but to the promise; and in that alone I must declare I have found enough.

“In the light of God’s Word, I saw also my own misery by nature ; and consequently could not help seeing all that I had been acquainted with, of every rank and degree, going also, as I had done, in the broad way that leads to destruction. It very evidently appeared by the testimony of God’s Word, and the conduct of the people, that this was the case then, there being a general slumber all over the land. The generality of the people spent the Lord’s day contrary to the laws of God and man, it being by none rightly observed ; neither had anyone whom I knew the true knowledge of that God whom we pretended to worship. No sooner was the worship over on the Lord’s day than the conduct of the people discovered that the heart was entirely alienated from all that was good. The remaining part of the day was spent in indulging the prevailing corruptions of nature : all family worship being entirely laid aside, except among some of the dissenters, while a universal deluge of swearing, lying, reveling and gaming, had overspread the country like a mighty torrent, and that without any notice taken of it, or a stop, so far as I had seen, being attempted to be put to it. Seeing thus rich and poor going as it were hand in hand in the broad way to ruin, my soul was stirred up within me. The ministers were the first that lay on my heart ; I saw they were not in earnest, and did not appear to have any sense of their own danger, nor any feeling sense of the love of Christ. Their instructions, therefore, delivered in such an unfeeling and indifferent manner, seemed to have no effect upon any of the hearers. I had never seen one man awakened by the preaching in the country. This view of their darkness, indifference and deadness, made me—out of the abundance of my heart—speak to some of those with whom I was acquainted. But finding it had no effect, I betook myself to secret prayer and mourning, and engaged some others to pray with me, and the Lord again renewed my strength.

“ Then I could not help making it my business to speak to

all I came near of their danger. Though I had but little knowledge of the way of salvation by faith, yet I was happy by *feeling* the blessedness of it in my heart. Death and judgment were my principal subjects of conversation, and the necessity of praying and receiving the sacrament. I began to set up family worship in my mother's house, and on Sunday mornings some of the neighbours would come to hear me reading the lessons and psalms. The evenings I spent with a few private friends whose hearts the Lord had touched with some sense of their danger; and now the fire of God did so burn in my soul that I could not rest day or night without doing something for my God and Saviour; nor could I go with satisfaction to sleep if I had not done something for His glory during the day. Time was so precious that I knew not how to improve it entirely to the glory of God and the good of others. When alone I was taken up wholly in reading, praying, or writing. At the same time I continued to go on exhorting the poor people, and they flocked to hear me every Sunday evening. I soon became the public talk of the country; but I was carried as on wings through all my trials, both inward and outward; I was highly favoured indeed by the Friend of sinners, and was now quite another man. I feared nothing, though my life was in danger from the threats of such as loved darkness rather than light; yet I was not moved, but went on comfortably, little thinking all this while that I was at any time to be more public. Thus I spent that summer, 1735."

We have now passed the first stage in Harris's career, and have allowed the whole to be related in his own simple words. Some letters written by him to his brother Joseph, in London, who was now making arrangements for his going to Oxford, and with whom he was in constant correspondence, are a further indication of the state of his mind. The letters, hitherto unpublished, are involved in their construction, and lack the directness and force of his subsequent epistles; but they contain evidence of deep thoughtfulness, and while showing the

firm grasp which the verities of religion had taken in his soul, they betray at the same time the uncertainty of purpose and the melancholy broodings of one whose ambition and prospects had been rudely shaken by the incoming of a higher force. But without needless comment, here are the letters :—

“ Talylyn, May 2, 1735.

“ Dear Brother (Joseph),

“ I had the satisfaction of yours of the 24th. As I have no great matter of news, I shall desire leave to give you a sincere account of part of what at present is my private pain. What affects me most is the great abuse I made of precious time. To think of what can't be redressed is a melancholy reflection. I have no more to say in my own behalf than that I have but little improvement to myself, nor did but the least good to others ; nay, it is what I never studied nor thought a duty on me till late, further than to gain the approbation of my friends. My outward qualification has so far attracted my attention that I took but little pains for the inward, and I fear it is a rock that is destructive to many. I think there is no greater hindrance to complete happiness, and to mould a truly generous soul, than to study the good name and applause of others ; for if that be the centre we aim at, we shall certainly suffer that monster flattery to come too near, which seems to me to be so much beneath a rational creature that if it is impossible to please the world without it only by a sincere and punctual execution of our duties, I shall before I embrace it bid the world adieu, and retreat to a corner where I shan't be observed.

“ I have hitherto erred so far from the mark of true honour as most, but I always had naturally some struggling between honour and meanness, though I could never come to sufficient resolution to study what honour and a brave soul was, or to put the same in practice ; but now I do most solemnly declare and willingly protest, that whatever friend I shan't be able to please by a punctual observation of my duties without super-

ficial ceremonies, hypocrisies, and approbation of whatever is said without the liberty of giving a contrary opinion without an affront or apology (which I take to be very hard on a man when he takes in hand to withstand a current lie), let my present happiness ever so much depend on that person whose friendship I am to retain by chains of formality, flattery, and servile approbation, I will throw off the yoke of that bondage from my conscience, and content myself with inward happiness since the other costs me so dear.

“I think a friend is, if such a person can be found, the greatest happiness we can enjoy here. But I have only an idea of it. I am in raptures when I read in Milton of the friendship between our first parents before self-designs came to the world. I almost utterly despair of having this gem in this world; I have tried often and as often been deceived, nor can I find one of my own way of thinking. Outward gaiety is the loadstone of the world. Be gay, you have friends enough; but be serious, you are a fool or melancholy. But I should think I have so much joy and uninterrupted pleasure that I am near being burst for want of a companion to partake; but there is an insurmountable obstacle in my way, namely, meanness of estate. Now the poor is so despicable that his reasons must not be heard; nay, I believe we are near come to this, that a poor man won't be admitted to have as rational a soul as the rich. But I think that happiness is come so far to my sight that I can say I am in hope of attaining it, though at the same time I never hope or wish—I do sincerely vow—to be rich. My riches are these: a friend, a book, a sufficient bulwark against poverty and the insults of the world, and an ability to entertain my friend. But I have several parts to act on the stage before I am to hope for these; and perhaps when I am just entering to my happiness I am knocked off, so that perhaps I am to be always swimming but never reaching the shore. I know I have not a sufficient share of those qualities to make a perfect friend, and that is the reason I so

much thirst for improvement. Not that I may some time or other be what is now called a great man; but a happy man—this is what would quench my thirst. But though defective, I am now in this point,—I have such an unquenchable desire of being accomplished in all the branches of the duties of a friend, that I firmly believe could I but find one so generously inclined as myself, and had so much true honour and contempt of other deficiencies, I should in conjunction with that friend be able to send you an entire picture of terrestrial happiness.”

“Talylyn, May 23, 1735.

“Dear Brother,

“I received yours of the 13th instant, and I can’t help returning my sincere thanks for your care to me, and I hope I shall never forget my duty to you and all my benefactors. I sincerely told you some notions of mine in my last, and as I find yours not in contradiction I am encouraged to proceed.

“As the happiness of a friend is the greatest on earth, so the want of that blessing is the greatest want. Though mean my state and business, I assure you I complain of no other want but this; and there is no other motive that makes me in the least think those that are richer than myself happier than I, but that they have greater advantages to further this happiness and more opportunities to read and converse with their friends. It is my misfortune at present that I am obliged to be alone from morning till night. I can have no other than melancholy reflections, or think of the vanities I have seen. I cannot all day read, my spirits are almost wasted; and therefore this is the one great motive that makes me desirous of a change, with hopes of finding my friend. I never could find such a person among my equals; and if by favour and admittance I thought I saw those qualities I longed for in superiors, then fortune would stare me in the face, and when I had a mind to utter something, the fear of being termed a fool, designing or impudent, made me stifle my notions for fear of being disobliging; so that as I am in circumstances mean and

in soul generous, I think there is no concordance. My want of riches tells me to give over hoping for this jewel amongst the rich, and the ignorance in this point of honour and friendship amongst those with whom I could use that freedom which must be the liberty of friendship, makes me despair of ever finding my happiness; but since I think I am made without a like, let despair be my cure, my book my counsellor and companion, and my pen and paper those that shall partake of my notions; and if I shall be ever able to be serviceable to my country it shall share my ambition in acting a part in that. But I believe it must be in private, for retirement is my choice, nor will I willingly part with it, which makes me almost loath to part with my present poor business because it is a private one; and I am unobserved by the eye of envy, out of the reach of fortune, and I hope of the malicious eye of the world. But when I read our duty to do our part in the public good, I must resolve to leave this in order to get further qualifications for acting in the same.

“But I shall add one other sincere and I hope unshaken resolution of mine—that I will not pretend anything but what I sincerely think (which I fancy is no proper resolution for a publick man), nor study to make others think, judge or say of me any better than conscience tells me I deserve. Nor shall it ever be my study at-all to make the world say well of me if it will not when I strictly observe my duty. Nor shall I study to gain the approbation of others by promises of self-interest or preferments; but those that I make my friends I will take some pains to please; and if I can retain the pleasure and good word of others with sincerity without adulation I shall be glad; if not, it shall not affect me. Let religion be my guide in all things, and devotion my delight, and I shall not err far from happiness though I have no friend; and let it be my study to make my conscience my friend, and then what difference is there to me between the censure and the applause of the world.

"Were my notions known, everybody must acknowledge I am not of the common way of thinking; but when they are tossed by envy, pride, malice or disappointment I shall then see still the plainer the excellency of content, and the beauties of religion's rules, which are all a firm rock to those that tread upon them.

"I thirst for improvement; but I have had such a notion of an Oxford life that I am in a strait what to do; but as you will conscientiously tender my future happiness, I will be entirely directed by your advice. But if I am the person to act, I desire you would consider me as you find me, for I hope and pray ever to remain in this strain, nor, as I shall endeavour to avoid the cause, must you or any other that shall think to correspond with me expect an apology, for my dead companion* shall be my correspondent, if I shan't have this liberty of speaking freely and have something corroborating or contradicting in return.

"I don't know whom I may meet in the world, for it is a large field; but I believe if I shall ever go from this country, as I have now but few friends, so I fancy I shall have fewer correspondents. You see I am pretty easy as to my going away; I am willing to go or stay according to direction."

"June 6th, 1735.

"Dear Brother,

"I had the pleasure of yours on the 30th ult., last night, and I am very much obliged to you; but your not hearing from Mr. Harte since does not give me so much uneasiness as formerly less matters did. I am sorry you have mistaken me in my last. What you call melancholy, and what formerly seemed so to myself, appears now to me to be the best grounded seriousness, and not a far step from happiness, which I suppose is the centre of all human views, though sometimes we see ourselves mistaken in the road to it, for we generally think that riches is a direct road. But I differ from

* He means probably his pen and paper.

this opinion, and I am heartily grieved that I am not such a person as may be permitted freely to speak or have my notions heard with attention ; but since I am what I cannot help, and want rhetoric to convince others of the inexpressible treasure of solitude and retirement, sweetened with content, I will for the future contract my notions to the narrow compass of my own heart, and rather than part with it will endure those contemptible titles of melancholy, book-learned, fool ; and I fancy did the gayest in the world once taste its dainties they would never long for another.

“ You need not doubt the sincerity of such a style as this, for it carries no design or recommendation, if such were necessary ; but if there is such a thing as sincerity, I most sincerely assure you it is my choice ; nor were a splendid public life tendered to me should it ever stand in competition with a decent medium in private between poverty and riches : nay, I devoutly say it, I pray against ambition, which perhaps as it is so uncommon will hardly be credited. I don’t in the least fear or doubt of a livelihood, and such a one as a better Judge than man will see best. I hope I am designed for some publick good, nor shall I think any labour or pain too much for my qualifying me for such a work. But if I find no other approbation than human, I shall hardly think all qualifications sufficient. I pity poor mankind, and I hope my own heart is at last made steady and unshaken by the frowns or smiles of fortune. I hope the applause and censure of the world shall never touch me so near as it has. I fear that this softness and desire to be well thought of by others is what leads many otherwise very good men out of the way ; or at least I think it was my case.

“ I am not so melancholy as you imagine. I enjoy a treasure which indeed I know not how to communicate. Grief is almost a stranger. I would not exchange conditions with a great many that seem to be much happier than I am. It is not a lowness of spirit, but an alteration in notions and prin-

ciples and resolutions that makes me so applaud solitude and despise riches to excess. I have a great degree of what I could wish all had,—inward and undisturbed happiness, grounded I hope on true humility, and a well-founded hope which I trust will set me on such a footing that I shall be out of the reach of envy, contempt of poverty, and the deceitfulness of riches.

“As this is a very promising opportunity, so I hereby testify my eagerness to lay hold of it, and though I must for some time lose what gives me this present felicity, yet if ever I shall be settled in life it must not be on a publick footing. Let those who love to see and be seen lay hold of these illusions of Madam Fortune. Allow me so much seriousness as to deal honestly with my soul. It is to be lamented that (religion) is become so obsolete that he is a subject of ridicule who offers to talk of it anywhere but in the pulpit. But where are those of my way of thinking? I long to be acquainted with them; and if I found them I would sooner part with life than with such friends.

“You see I am unshaken in my resolution, and therefore don’t dissuade me, but direct me in this road. Never study to make me a publick man, for, if I be allowed to judge of myself, I assure you I never was designed for it. If there is anything worth observation in me (as I believe God imparts some talent extraordinary to most) it must be somewhere out of sight; and it shall always be my study, natural inclination assisting, to adorn the soul more than this mean despicable body.”

It may fairly be presumed from the relationship between these two correspondents that there was an amount of freedom in the letters of Howell which he would not have assumed towards a stranger; and while his affectionate disposition yearns for the secrecy of a sympathising and reliable companion, he makes the most of his brother in that capacity.

The tendency to retirement and the enconiums on solitude with which those early letters are replete, as well as the depreciation he casts upon the false estimates of the world and the projects of ambition, are probably the recoil of a proud and aspiring nature under the influence of deep religious conviction. He would naturally have delighted in popularity for its own sake ; but now that the applause of the world had been eclipsed by the glory of a higher approval, he desires to render what service he can amidst the charms of obscurity ; and hence the following anonymous letter, which he sent the vicar of his parish.

“ Aug. 16, 1735.

“ Dear Sir,

“ Having the happiness to be of the number of your auditors, the zeal you express in the performance of your duty encouraged me to this recourse of communicating what I secretly wished I could more obviously have done long ago.

“ I have the pleasure of finding some who are willing to join me in a strict observance of our duty, and have for some time sincerely endeavoured to practise those excellent doctrines we have from you, for which, as I have reason to say that God knows your labour with success here, so I firmly believe you will not lose your reward amongst the laborious pastors in heaven, whither I have with some others firmly vowed and resolved, by God’s help, in spite of all obstructions to direct our course. But finding our ignorance in the heavenly road and our weakness to be great, it made me presume to let you know a very great desire we have of communicating oftener—if your discretion thinks fit, once a month. That being with God’s blessing, and your pious endeavour, joined with our observation and performance of our part, the most and only effectual means to kindle this heavenly spark, which otherwise we experience is in danger to cool and die.

“ I have some particular but very cogent reasons to add ; but as they will be tedious and I hope not necessary, I shall

omit them. I hope that custom shan't stand in competition with duty; and the granting this request will I hope extend its benefits further than we may imagine, and consequently be attended with inconceivable blessings to yourself.

"I shall with impatience wait the success of this, which instead of an apology has my prayers with it, which conclude this from, Reverend Sir,

"Your constant auditor,

"And sincere humble servant,

"TREV."

"P.S.—I hope you will excuse my not subscribing my name, there being I hope no need of questions. If praise be due, let it return to the Fountain. I shall add to your share in it too."

CHAPTER IV.

AGGRESSIVE.

THE reader will have observed in the foregoing chapter the various stages in the progress of Harris's conversion, from the first desire to amend his ways down through the period of asceticism and self-mortification, and on to the time when he was delivered from all his fears and found uninterrupted rest in the love and faithfulness of God his Saviour. It will also have been noticed how the divine light which shone into his soul, and made him sensible of his own misery, revealed to him the spiritual destitution and danger of all with whom he was acquainted of every rank and degree; and how the compassion he felt for souls, intensifying as it went along, became in the space of a few short weeks so absorbing a passion that it burned within him like 'the fire of God,' and gave him no rest day or night. The scene of spiritual destitution also that met his gaze, and which evoked all his ardour, has been already partly described by himself, and needs no further remark here than to mention that it was the same as that which characterized the remainder of the kingdom at this benighted period; with this difference only, that on account of the English services which had been thrust upon many a Welsh parish, the ignorance was more dense, the darkness deeper, and the wickedness more appalling.

In the beginning of November, 1735, the kindness of friends, and in particular that of his brother Joseph, enabled Harris to complete his arrangements for going to Oxford. He entered at St. Mary's Hall, under the tuition of Mr. Hart. A

letter from Mr. Joseph Harris, dated London, January 24th, 1736, reveals the dependent condition of Howell, as well as the happy relation that existed between him and his brother. "You'll find in this box," he writes, "an old suit of mine which my brother has altered for you, with two pairs of breeches belonging to it ; also my old leather breeches. These may do you a good deal of service for common wear, either in the country or at Oxford." After mentioning other articles of apparel sent by his brother Thomas, and a book on navigation,—which it may be presumed, from the fact that he desired Howell to keep it for his sake, had recently been published by himself,—he goes on to weightier matters, and concludes in a glowing passage on the need of charity and benevolence as well as other moral and pious duties, and cautions his brother amongst other evils to "beware of enthusiasm."

The tendency of collegiate life at Oxford about this time to cure the last-named distemper has been aptly depicted by Mr. John Wesley. According to him, the University contained those who were often "more pernicious than open libertines, —men who retained something of outward decency and nothing else ; who seriously idle away the whole day, and repeatedly revel till midnight ; and if not drunken themselves, yet encouraging and applauding those that are so ; who have no more of the form than of the power of godliness ; and though they do pretty often drop in at the public prayers, coming after the most solemn part is over, yet expressly disowning any obligation to attend."*

It had been the earnest aim of Mr. John Wesley to influence for good the young men under his charge at the University, and to imbue them with the love of study. It was the rigid system and perseverance with which he and his associates apportioned their time to the duties of reading and religion that had obtained for them in the first instance the nickname

"Oxford Methodism," by Tyerman, p. 18.

of Methodists. It would have been well, possibly, for Harris in some respects if he had come in contact with Wesley. He and his brother Charles had, however, now taken their departure for Georgia, and nearly the whole of that small but earnest band of religionists of which they had been the centre were dispersed in various directions. Young Harris, however, needed not their protection against the allurements of the place. He had left his home already possessed of a counter and more powerful attraction in his love for devotional exercises. "Having now," he says, "no taste for the entertainments at Oxford, I spent the greater part of my time in secret prayers or in public worship. My friends were now in hopes I should be effectually cured of my enthusiasm, as they called it; but the Lord Jesus had now got possession of my heart, so that notwithstanding the promising prospect before me, having had the promise to be admitted as sub-tutor at a great school, and a benefice of £140 per annum by a certain gentleman; and although I was encompassed with fair prospects, yet when I saw the irregularities and immoralities which surrounded me there, I became soon weary of the place and cried to God to deliver me from thence; and thus after keeping that term I was again brought to my dear friends in Wales."

The first concern of Harris on quitting the University was to resume the religious labours that had been interrupted. The zeal with which he prosecuted his task is still a matter of tradition, and shows how deep the fire had burned into his soul. He went from house to house in his own and the neighbouring parishes, he accosted the people he met on the road, he crossed over hedges to speak to a solitary toiler at the plough or the harrow; and when he conducted his work in a more public way, "the people began to assemble by vast numbers, so that the houses wherein we met could not contain them. The word was attended with such power that many on the spot cried out to God for the pardon of their sins; and such

as lived in malice confessed their sins, making peace with each other, and appeared in concern about their eternal state. Family worship was set up in many houses, and the churches as far as I had gone were crowded, and likewise the Lord's table."

It was an inspiring sight to see a young man thus cast his prospects to the wind, and returning to the solitude of the Welsh mountains and valleys for the purpose of awakening a nation asleep in sin; but the success of his efforts aroused hostility. The populace began to revile and persecute; the magistrates foamed, and threatened him and such as received him into their houses with all the penalties of the Conventicle Act; and the clergy, indignant at the interference of a layman in what they considered their exclusive domain, did all in their power to discourage him in his work, as may be seen from the following disheartening letter from the vicar of his own parish, which he received February, 1736.

"Sir,—When first I was informed that you took upon you to instruct your neighbours at Trefecca on a particular occasion—I mean of the nature of the Sacrament, and enforce their duty by reading a chapter out of that excellent book, 'The whole Duty of Man,' I thought it proceeded from a pious and charitable disposition. But since you are advanced as far as to have your public lectures from house to house, and even within the limits of the church, it is full time to let you know the sin and penalty you incur by so doing. The office you have freely undertaken belongs not to the laity any further than privately in their own families; and if you will be pleased to take your Bible in hand, you will there find the heavy judgments which God inflicted upon the sacrilege and impiety of those who audaciously presumed to invade the office ministerial. If you will consult the histories of this as well as other nations, you will see the dismal and lamentable effects of a factious zeal and a puritanical sanctity: for it is an easy matter to seduce ignorant and illiterate people, and by cunning

insinuations from house to house, induce them to embrace what tenets you please. I have yet one heavy crime to lay to your charge, which is this :—that after you have expatiated, upon a Sunday, upon the ‘Whole Duty of Man,’ to your auditors, which in my opinion, is wrote in so plain and intelligible a manner that it is incapable of paraphrase, unless it be to obscure and confound the author’s meaning, you concluded with a long extemporary prayer, with repetitions, tautologies, &c. Pray consider how odiously this savours of fanaticism and hypocrisy. What I have already said will, I hope, dissuade you for the future from such practices. But if the admonition of your minister will not prevail, I will acquaint your brother of it ; and if you will persist in your way, I must acquaint my diocesan of it, which will prove an immoveable obstruction to your ever getting into Holy Orders ; for your continuance in it will give me, as well as others, just reason to conclude that your intellectuals are not sound.

“ I am your well-wisher, and assured humble servant,

“ P. DAVIES.”

“ P.S.—I have herewith sent you Mr. Nelson,* and by seriously weighing what is there said of the sacred function, as you will see marked in Ember Week, you will be convinced of your error.”

“ To Mr. Howell Harris, at Trefecca.”

The foregoing letter from the pen of the Rev. Pryce Davies, Harris’s own spiritual father, must not be confounded with that bitter persecution which arises from hatred of goodness. The worthy vicar’s remonstrance was made in the interest of church order, and, apart from a trifling acerbity of manner, contains no greater evil than a misapprehension of the motives by which his young parishioner was actuated. It was Harris’s set purpose to devote his life to the service of God in the ministry of the Established Church ; and as the convictions he had passed through had given him a new and clearer in-

* On “Fasts and Festivals,” Dr. T. Rees.

sight to the nature of ministerial work, he saw nothing reprovable in devoting the time he was waiting to preliminary practice.

Had he remained in the position of a layman, or even had he entered upon his course from a total disregard of order and propriety, his action would justly have fallen under censure. But he had from the beginning the profoundest veneration for the office of the ministry, and when the time arrived he repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, sought to be admitted to its ranks. Mr. Theophilus Jones, the historian of Harris's native county, was uncertain whether Harris was denied ordination on the score of his eccentricities, or whether he was deficient in classical learning. Mr. Whitfield maintains that he was rejected on the false pretence of non-canonical age; but as the application was renewed when the objection to youth could no longer be urged, and Mr. Whitfield himself bears witness to his qualifications, his non-success must be assigned to another reason. The Vicar of Talgarth's letter partly supplies that reason, by its threat to place an immoveable barrier in the way of Harris's ordination; and the reason is supplied in full, by the fact that the Rev. Daniel Rowlands and the Rev. William Williams were thrust out of their curacies for the same enthusiasm as that of which Harris was guilty.

Mr. Joseph Harris, the brother to whom Mr. Pryce Davies threatens further to write, was by no means an approver of the methods of Howell; but his affection towards him was never disturbed. In March, 1736, he wrote to Trevecca requesting Howell to engage a young man for him in the capacity of a servant; the answer incidentally reveals the deplorable moral condition of the neighbourhood, by the admission that most of the young men of the place were tainted with some vice or other. But it serves another purpose. It brings out the writer in the character of a lover; and in connection therewith we have, not only the ambition of a consciously able and aspiring youth in conflict with religious duty, but we have

this fiery enthusiast, who afterwards quailed not at the menaces of raging mobs, turned speechless in the presence of the damsel by whom he was smitten. "God," he writes, "has done great things for you ; and I see some things in myself much above my birth. I hope God may yet frame my brother Thomas again, as He has been pleased to do me, and make him yet great and happy. My happiness is in myself. The private joys of a religious life are rather conceivable than to be described. That, with content, and the satisfaction I enjoy in the society and favour of — makes me easy amidst many waves that beat upon me. The reformation of so many people has drawn upon me the envy of some mean narrow-thinking parsons, though none that know me, who endeavour to disturb my peace as much as they can, and seem already to dread the piety and true christian zeal of one, who being not guilty of their practices may not be afraid to expose them in time, if thereby any good can be done. I have the satisfaction to tell you that — comes nearest in my opinion of any I converse with of that sex to myself. I was there last week one night, and greatest part of two days, but still had the former awe upon me and could speak nothing."

The romantic little incident of being in love is one of which the reader has already possibly had a suspicion ; but as it was only a passing emotion, and does not recur until some years are gone over in his history, we return to his religious conviction. This was the only principle that was permanent and abiding ; and as it went on increasing in depth, it set him with greater determination upon those aggressive measures that evoked the full hostility of the opposing powers.

"The opposition encountered," Mr. Harris tells us, "put some stop for a short time to the work of the Revival ; yet it could not extinguish the flame that was kindled. Though fear kept many back, yet such as were drawn by the divine attraction could not be affrighted ; and I continued still to meet those secretly, and also the following spring I continued in going

from house to house as before, speaking to all that were inclined to hear me. By this time I had gained acquaintance with several Dissenters, who kindly received me to their houses. In this manner I went on till advised by a particular friend, the latter end of the summer in 1736, to set up a school at Trevecca, which I did, but removed from thence to the parish church. By this means a great many young persons had laid hold of this opportunity, and came to be further instructed in the way of salvation; but oh, with a bleeding heart I now think of many of them, seeing they were likely to end in the flesh, after they had well begun in the spirit."

The school which Howell Harris was induced to set up was established under the auspices of the Rev. Griffith Jones, whom it is necessary now to introduce. He was born of nonconformist parents in the parish of Cilrhedyn, Carmarthenshire, in the year 1684, and after being educated at the grammar school of his county town was ordained a deacon by Bishop Bull in 1708, and priest in the following year. He was admitted by all to have been the greatest preacher of his day in the whole of the Principality, being an orator of effective and splendid power. The churches he served became crowded with hearers, and he often received invitations to preach in distant parts, contriving to make his excursions during the festive seasons, with the design of counteracting the wakes and vanity fairs, and other impious gatherings that were held at those times. He has left an undying name as the author of many valuable works; but his chief title to the gratitude of posterity rests upon an institution he devised for the diffusion of education in Wales, still known under the name of the "Welsh Circulating Schools." His plan in the conduct of those schools was to engage a number of masters and then distribute them in different directions over the country. The duty of these men was to teach the people to read the Scriptures in the Welsh language, to catechize them, to instruct them in psalmody, and to promote their religious

advancement by every means in their power ; " passing on to fresh districts when their purpose was accomplished, and revisiting their former localities when the necessity of the case demanded. These schools, which were begun in 1730, increased to such an extent that in 1746 they were 116 in number, and 215 in the year 1760.* They were further so interlaced in their influence with the great Welsh Revival that each of the movements is indebted for a large amount of its prosperity to the assistance derived from the other ; and while we find a reformation of manners and an increase in communicants attributed in one place to the preaching of Harris, we find a similar result ascribed in another to the influence of Mr. Griffith Jones's schools.

In the summer of 1736 young Harris paid this remarkable man a visit at Llanddowror. On returning to his home he opens his academy, and on the 8th October writes to inform Mr. Jones of his decided success. Young Harris received many books from Mr. Jones for gratuitous distribution ; but from bills and other papers addressed to Mr. Howell Harris, Schoolmaster, Trevecca, it would seem that the school was principally one of private adventure. Amongst the books enumerated on the bills are Bibles, copies of " The whole Duty of Man," the " Imitatio Christi," by Thomas à Kempis, Church Catechisms, Virgil, Terence, Dialogues in Greek, as well as books of a more elementary character suitable for the use of children.

The school young Harris kept was not the only means he availed himself of to spread the work of the revival. The latter end of the year a man went about, probably one of the more humble of Mr. Griffith Jones's itinerant schoolmasters, to instruct young people to sing psalms. " This gave me another opportunity," writes Harris, " to show my love to my dear fellow-sinners ; for the people being met to learn and to hear him sing, there was no objection made any more than to

* Johnes's " Causes of Dissent in Wales," Chap. I.

assemblies met for cock-fighting or dancing. I laid hold of this opportunity. When he had done teaching them to sing, I would give them a word of exhortation, and thereby many were brought under convictions, and many religious societies were by these means formed. I began in imitation of the societies which Dr. Woodward gave an account of in a little treatise he wrote on that head, there being as yet no other societies of the kind in England or Wales, the English Methodists not being as yet heard of, though the Lord was now, as I found afterward, working on some of them in Oxford and elsewhere."

The societies mentioned by Dr. Josiah Woodward belonged to the Established Church. They had done considerable good, but as they were confined to the Metropolis and had now sunk into lifelessness and insignificance they were unknown to Harris, so that the idea of establishing them in the Principality was, excepting so far as Woodward suggested the plan, an original thought. Their object was to associate in religious fellowship the men and women who had been brought under conviction by Harris's ministry, and who from the opposition of the time were exposed to the same persecution. The earliest of these societies, which may be regarded as the first-fruits of Welsh Methodism, and of all Methodism, being formed three years before Mr. Wesley adopted a similar plan, was founded by Harris at Erwood, a distance of eight miles from his own home. A similar step was pursued on May 21, 1739, by Rev. James Hervey, M.A., one of the Oxford Methodists, when he established a society at Bideford, "by no means," he writes, "in contradistinction to the Established Church, but in dutiful conformity to her. Woodward's rules we purpose punctually to observe, reading his exhortations distinctly and solemnly; offering up his prayers humbly and reverently; only with this difference, that some edifying book be substituted in the room of religious talk, not because we disapprove of religious conference, but

because we think ourselves scarcely capable of managing it with regularity, propriety, and order." In the societies founded by Harris the religious conference and talk was duly observed, and from then to the present day the societies have been conducted with regularity, propriety, and order, and with much edification to thousands of christians.

The step thus taken in advance was not likely to abate the spirit of antagonism. "But when I was thus exposed to all kinds of opposition, though I saw no proper steps which I could securely take, yet the way was again opened. But I was *threatened* that I should be silenced. However, the beginning of the following summer, in 1737, a gentleman in Radnorshire sent for me to discourse at his house. This stirred the curiosity of some of the better sort of people to come to hear me; whilst others in conversing with me had their prejudices much removed, and others were convinced. I had reason to believe the Lord would bless my labours. Though I still continued to keep school, yet I went out every night to such places where I was sent for, and did the same on the holy-days and on the Sabbath, until at last, about the latter end of this year, I was turned out of my school. This conduced to enlarge my sphere; for after this I readily complied with every invitation, and went wherever I was sent for by day and night, discoursing generally three or four and sometimes five and six times a day to crowded auditories."

The pedagogic period of Harris's life was now at an end. But the schoolmaster was not immediately merged into the religious reformer; he continued to take the deepest interest in education, and as the itinerant life he now commenced was favourable to a knowlédge of the requirements of other neighbourhoods he soon became an active coadjutor with the Rev. Griffith Jones, and an intermediary between that clergyman and those who had no acquaintance with him, receiving from one direction an appeal for his influence in obtaining some of Mr. Jones's grant, and from another—as we find from several

letters still preserved at Trevecca—imploing appeals for employment in the capacity of teachers.

Mr. Harris had now emerged into the full blaze of public notice; but immediately in his wake, if not indeed side by side with him, stopping when he stopped and moving when he moved, there stalked the demon of opposition. He was loaded with calumnies from all quarters. Magistrates threatened, and the clergy denounced him from their pulpits as a false prophet and deceiver; the mob also was active, and would lie in wait for him with intentions of mischief. But nothing damped his ardour; for, according to his own expression, he “was carried as on the wings of an eagle triumphantly above all.”

Amongst the early opponents of Harris, and indeed amongst his early conquests, being in fact one of the most distinguished of his converts, may be mentioned Mr. Marmaduke Gwynn, of the Garth, Breconshire, one of the lords of the upper part of the county. Howell Harris was expected to the neighbourhood, and Mr. Gwynn “being alarmed at the reports he had heard respecting him, determined, as a magistrate, to put an end to his proceedings. Supposing he held the tenets maliciously ascribed to the Independent Dissenters in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and regarding him as an incendiary in Church and State, Mr. Gwynn prepared himself for an open attack; but said to his lady in going out, ‘I will hear the man myself before I commit him.’ Accordingly he made one of the congregation, eagerly waiting to lay hold of anything that might be construed into a charge against the preacher. He had also the Riot Act in his pocket, which he was prepared to read and thus disperse the people. Harris’s sermon, however, was so truly evangelical, so calculated to arouse the careless, to alarm the wicked, and to encourage the penitent, and his manner so zealous and affectionate, that Mr. Gwynn thought he resembled one of the Apostles. He was so convinced of the purity of his doctrines, and of the

benevolence of his motives, that at the end of the discourse he went up to him, shook him by the hand, told him how much he had been misled by slanderous reports, avowed the intentions he had formed of committing him, asked his pardon, and, to the amazement of the assembly, entreated him to accompany him back to Garth to supper. Mrs. Gwynn was a woman of superior understanding, but under strong prejudices of birth and fortune. She was one of six heiresses each of whom had £30,000 for her portion, and had married into suitable families of high descent and splendour. She was a violent enemy to all Dissenters; and when her husband returned, introducing Harris, a man of inferior rank, an innovator in the Church, and as she suspected, a rebel against the King; and when she heard Mr. Gwynn himself in the presence of his whole family entreat his forgiveness, acknowledge his error, and pay him as much respect as he would a bishop, she thought her dear husband must have lost his senses, and in grief and consternation she quitted the room, nor would return to it until after supper when Harris had departed. Nothing, however, could alter the opinion Mr. Gwynn had formed, or remove his attachment to the preacher. His daughter Sarah, afterwards the wife of the Rev. Charles Wesley, also entered into the views of her father. She delighted to accompany him to hear Harris; her mind was open to receive the truth, and she was particularly benefitted by his discourses. Her piety and religious profession, therefore, exposed her to the raillery of her gay brothers and sisters; and her partiality to Harris incurred the displeasure of her mother, who passed much of her time in tears at the supposed infatuation of her family. Nor was she reconciled to Methodism until she had perused the 'Appeals' of Mr. John Wesley, and heard the character of the two brothers from some of their colleagues at Oxford, which convinced her that their intentions must be good. Until then she would not hear Harris; but afterwards her

remaining prejudices were entirely removed. The authority and countenance of Mr. Gwynn and his family now became highly important to the cause of religion. Regardless of public and private censure he openly stood up in Harris's defence, and made use of his extensive influence in promoting the spread of the Gospel."*

The labours of Harris at this time would probably awaken misgiving even in those who were not unfavourable to his aims. Were they merely the vagaries of a disordered brain? or, assuming them to be genuine, were they soon likely to expend his fervour and leave him in greater obscurity than before? Regarded, however, in the light of subsequent events, his early career stands out as simply heroic. He had renounced, not the pleasures of sin merely, but the legitimate safety and aspirations of the average christian, and had marched forth alone amidst his native mountains and valleys encountering the most violent hatred, and aiming only at one result—the reformation of the country from the abuses of sin.

The truths required for this purpose must of necessity be of an alarming character; and the person who undertakes to enforce them must possess every needful qualification. The preaching of Howell Harris at this time was full of alarm, and he himself was fitted to give effective utterance to the truths he had embraced. His temperament was warm and his frame like that of an athlete, and his hatred of sin such that when he stormed men writhed under the streams of his wrath. "I took no particular texts," he says, "but discoursed freely as the Lord gave me utterance. The gift I had received was as yet to convince the conscience of sin."

A contemporary writes of him in the following terms: "About those years (1735-7) Mr. Howell Harris began to go out in Breconshire to exhort his neighbours concerning the interests of their souls. He soon grew in gifts and knowledge, and went out to other counties. Vast numbers of young

* "Memoirs of Howell Harris, Esq.," by John Bulmer, pp. 27-9.

people and others in Wales were then quite irreligious, and used to hold meetings for dancing, intemperate drinking, and to amuse themselves with various wicked practices. These almost all reckoned themselves as members of the Church of England. When Mr. Harris began to traverse the country he thundered most awfully against cursers, swearers, drunkards, fighters, liars, Sabbath-breakers, &c., and as it were scattered sparks of the fire of hell amongst them. He would exhort in dwelling-houses, fields, and wherever he could get people together to hear him; as Mr. Walter Craddock, Mr. Vavasor Powell, and others had done in Wales a hundred years before. But this was quite a new thing in our days, and its novelty attracted large multitudes to hear.”*

* The result of these unauthorised and bitterly opposed proceedings was that a general reformation began to appear in several counties. Public diversions became unfashionable, religion became the common talk of the people, places of worship were everywhere crowded, and the religious societies were increased in number.

The following letter will show the spirit by which Harris was at this time actuated.

“To A. W.

“August 26th, 1737.

“When I opened the paper you gave me I was confounded at the goodness thereof, and notwithstanding the constant hurry I have been in, which has caused me to drop correspondence with many dear and valuable friends, the particular tenderness I find within me for your salvation has made me resolve to rob myself of my sleep to-night in order to send my sentiments to you, looking to heaven, to that great King who sees the words on paper and the motives that induce me to write, for a blessing on these lines to have the desired effect of being a means to further your eternal bliss, as I am sure I shall soon, for the race is but short, appear before Christ’s

* “Hanes y Bedyddwyr,” pp. 52-3; “Nonconformiity in Wales,” p. 329.

throne; and I do not know how soon I may have to meet His messengers.

“ Since I have spent so much of the flower of my time in vanity and folly, I hold myself obligated now to do all I can to undeceive poor mankind, that are kept from real and solid happiness and pleasure in looking at the outside of things. It is greater satisfaction to me than perhaps you will easily believe, to see that you have gone on so far, and I hope you will not be hindered by any enemy, spiritual or temporal, from going on until we shall meet where no enemy shall disturb our rest. But ere we reach there, what enemies have we to encounter ! O ! how easily may we be deceived with false hopes, and drop to eternal misery, while we flatter ourselves with ungrounded hopes of belonging to His heavenly choir ; but of that glorious multitude we cannot warrantably hope to be until we are first made holy by the Spirit of God, to obtain which, as He is freely given to such as seek Him, so it is our chief business to wait upon God as frequently as possible in private ; and when we find at any time the heart made tender, to retire to prayer, lest by refusing to obey such calls we may call and not be heard.

“ But while this must be chiefly attended to, we must not be ashamed to own our glorious King and His cause in public. If we deny Him, He will likewise deny us when we stand before Him. O ! what a heart-breaking thought this is. Let us consider now how we may be guilty of it. Is it not when we act contrary to God’s rule, ‘ Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them ; ’ ‘ be not conformed to this world ’ ? And is it not because we are weak, and unwilling to bear the ignominious but noble titles of saints, fools, &c., in following Christ ? Let us, therefore, present our petitions continually to our Captain (who though we cannot see Him with eyes of flesh, yet sees and watches over us), for christian courage and resolution, guided by a clear and true knowledge of the Scriptures, as well as by

prudence and humility. Let us be true to His cause, and then whatever mountains of impossibilities the flesh sets before our eyes, soon will He remove them all. When I read of the zeal of the primitive christians and of what they suffered; and when I consider the great diligence of some christians now living with whom I am acquainted, that day and night they watch, strive, fast and pray, and yet fear on account of the straightness of the gate—O! I cannot help begging a share of your addresses to heaven for more renewing grace, else where shall I appear, seeing that I am so fruitless. Pardon my freedom with you, if, when I see the deceit of my own heart and my weakness to resist temptation, I write thus to you to quicken your zeal and to animate your courage to resist all enemies. Oh! that we had faith to see what a glorious Captain ours is; what noble honours He has to bestow on all His faithful servants; what a glorious company there is awaiting us, if we use the few moments we have to fit ourselves through grace for their enjoyments. Oh, what music is there! what seraphic joys and everlasting pleasures are there! O! how should not our souls be rather longing to be there, than take up with such transitory, false, deluding pleasures as are here. Methinks, if I were not afraid of tiring you, the fear lest you should be deceived by the toys of the world and come short at last, would supply me with matter enough to write till morning. The station you are in exposes you to greater temptations than those who move in lower spheres; but if you will once test what true godliness is, and see the need of Jesus Christ, and have your eye fixed on and surrender your affections to Him, it will then be an easy matter to renounce the ridicule and revilings of the world. What an honour it will be to be crowned before the face of those blind persons who now ridicule! Between what the world calls pleasure, and true solid joys, there is in reality a partition wall. May we taste the sweetness which is in the love of Christ. It is His love that makes us see the difference

between this world, with all its pleasures, honours and enjoyment, and another; and this would consequently incline us to despise the present so far as it is a hindrance to future bliss. If we attend to what the world speaks of us, it will, if not entirely hinder us, yet very much slacken our pace: but let us not look behind, lest we become like Lot's wife. Rather let us look before us, and seriously consider what thoughts we shall have of worldly applause and advantages, when we are overtaken by death, when these eyes of dust grow dim, and the soul be about to enter into eternity. O! who can express or conceive the terrors our souls will then feel, if for want of striving in good earnest in time we shall sink into eternal misery, after we had stood so fair a chance to escape it. On the other hand, if we remain faithful to our great King, the pleasures we shall then enjoy our hearts cannot now conceive. If we are so pleased now to hear of the joys of heaven,—joys which words cannot express,—what raptures shall not the soul experience when at last, having with great difficulty escaped the wiles of the devil, the deceit of the heart, the carnal desires of the flesh, the false pleasures of the world, with the great hindrances daily met with from friends and enemies, she sees herself in the arms of her beloved Saviour. I blush and tremble with fear, on account of my own impurity and unfitness to partake of such heavenly joys, lest having exhorted others I myself should fall short. O! the heavens are not clear in His sight! No wonder, therefore, that He gives us such strict charges to strive against all hindrances, to mortify our inward impurities that prevent His dwelling within us.

“We have indeed occasion enough to fast and to humble ourselves to the lowest degree, be it ever so grievous to our corrupt nature to do so, for our past sins and negligences,—that we ever slighted His calls and lived in ignorance of Him so long, as well as for our present reluctance to obey Him. I am confounded at the thought of our indifference in a matter

of so much weight,—suffering ourselves to be led away by shame lest we should be called singular, and by laziness with the things of God. O! what shall we say to the Judge when He shall appear before men and angels, and declare how often by His word, by examples of His judgment, by promises, threats, and admonitions, He has called and invited us. O! that we would truly weigh these and a thousand such-like considerations! It would be the means to awaken us from our slumber, and induce us voluntarily to enlist under Christ's banner, and fight His battles fully, zealously, wisely, and resolutely; which, that you may attain to, is my sincere desire and hearty prayer."

"HOWELL HARRIS."

CHAPTER V.

CONTEMPORARIES.

I N ascribing the great revival in Wales to the instrumentality of Howell Harris, it must be borne in mind that the honour does not belong to him in so exclusive a sense as to shut out all others from participation ; nor does it belong to him in so pre-eminent a degree as to leave him without a rival in the claim for the leading position. In priority of time, as well as in the fearless intrepidity of his character, the palm undoubtedly belongs to Harris ; but the Rev. Daniel Rowlands, of Llangeitho, in Cardiganshire, whose name will frequently occur in the course of these pages, is regarded equally with Harris as the founder of Welsh Methodism ; and for reasons which will eventually appear, his memory is still more affectionately cherished by a considerable part of the denomination to which the movement gave rise.

No revival of religion would be worthy of the name if, like the contents of a water-spout, it simply inundated a solitary spot, while it left the remainder of the land in a state of desolation. The Methodist revival may rather be likened to the wide-spread falling of a copious dew. Certainly the dew, as with the fleece of old, was more concentrated upon some than others, but the country at large participated of the blessing ; and so far as Wales, with which the present history has to do, was concerned, the soil had been prepared by the labours of the Rev. Griffith Jones.

On one occasion Mr. Jones preached in the parish church

of Llanddewi-brefi, Cardiganshire, to a large congregation, amongst which was the Rev. Daniel Rowlands, of Llangeitho, already alluded to. Mr. Rowlands was at this time a young clergyman of twenty-four years of age, and though admittedly a stranger to the spiritual authority of religion, was an attractive preacher, having been moved to air his ability by no higher motive than envy at the larger congregations that attended the services of a well-known Nonconformist minister of his neighbourhood, the pious and talented Mr. Philip Pugh. Planting himself in the church at Llanddewi-brefi in front of Mr. Jones in an attitude of carelessness, and with an expression of cynicism that was calculated to discompose, the preacher was moved in the midst of his earnestness to interject a prayer on his behalf, beseeching the Almighty to make him an instrument for good in the salvation of souls. So well directed was the shaft that the haughty young clergyman was effectively brought down, and from that moment became a preacher of such unfeigned earnestness and commanding power as to obscure the fame of Mr. Griffith Jones himself, and pressed forward to undisputed possession of the summit of eminence amongst the preachers of the Principality. He threw himself heartily into the work of the revival, and in pursuance of a course that occurred to his own mind, without any knowledge of what Mr. Harris was doing, began to form his converts into societies. "As for the other minister, and great man of God, Mr. Daniel Rowlands," writes Howell Harris, "he was awakened about the same time as myself, in another part of Wales, namely in Cardiganshire, where, by reason of there being but little correspondence between that county and Breconshire, he went on gradually growing in gifts and power without knowing anything of me, or myself knowing anything of him; until by providence, in the year 1737, I came to hear him in Devynock Church, in the upper part of our county, where upon hearing the sermon and seeing the gifts given him, and the amazing power and authority

with which he spoke, and the effects it had upon the people, I was made indeed thankful, and my heart burned with love to God and to him. Here began my acquaintance with him, and to all eternity it shall not end.

“ This proved the first means of my going to Cardiganshire, where, on hearing more of his doctrine and character, I grew more in love with him ; and from that time to this, having been favoured with many glorious opportunities of sitting under his ministry to the great benefit of my soul, I am obliged to admire more and more the wonderful work of God in him. As he has been so blessed to thousands in several counties, and is more and more owned of God in calling in and building up the lambs of Christ, so it cannot be expected he should escape the malice of the enemy, which he vents upon him in all ways he is permitted, inventing all manner of lies ; but in such a manner is the Lord with him that I believe the dragon trembles the way he goes. Though I have been now favoured with hearing, and reading the works of many of God’s ministers, I do not know, so far as I am capable of judging, that I have known any so favoured with gifts and powers ; such a penetrating light to the spirit of the Scriptures to set forth the mystery of Godliness and the glory of Christ. And though he has been often charged with errors, yet the Eternal Spirit has so led him to all truth, and so saved him from falling to any error, that his ministry is, I believe, now one of the greatest blessings that the church of God in this part of the world enjoys. Many counties partake this blessing, he being indefatigable in going about, and I believe seldom, if ever, opens his mouth without a great blessing attending. This is not for a while, but has continued to my knowledge for nearly seven years. All who are able, that have had eyes to distinguish, flock to his ministry, and congregate from all parties and counties—there being often in his congregations and communions persons from eight different counties at the same time. The visible effects on

the people under the word and after; as well as the lives and conversations of them that are wrought upon, prove to such as have spiritual eyes, and do not shut them against conviction, that God is there in an uncommon manner."

Another of the Welsh reformers who was indebted to the piety and example of Mr. Griffith Jones was a young clergyman of delicate frame but determined spirit, of the name of Howell Davies. Mr. Davies had been assisted by Mr. Jones in his preparation for the ministry, and when the day of his ordination arrived, his friend and father in Christ bespoke the prayers of the congregation in his favour. Those prayers seem not only to have been offered, but answered, for in a short time the young minister went forth in the spirit and power of Elias, and attracted thousands by his ministry. He also became acquainted with Harris and Rowlands, and though he retained his benefice in Pembrokeshire to the time of his death, in March, 1770, he was deeply imbued with the spirit of the revival, and itinerated far and near as a Methodist clergyman.

The Rev. W. Williams, of Pant-y-celyn, was also a co-adjutor with Harris in the work of the revival; and if not socially was at any rate religiously the most distinguished of Harris's converts. He had been destined by his parents for the medical profession, and at the time of his change was pursuing his studies under the tuition of Mr. Vavasor Griffiths, at Llwynllwyd, near Hay, in Breconshire. Having heard of the extraordinary young reformer from Trevecca, whose fame was now beginning to fill the land, he went over to Talgarth on a Sunday morning to hear him. Tradition affirms that it was the custom of Harris at this time, in virtue of the freehold of his father's grave, to preach from the tombstone when the service was over, his congregation comprising not only the attendants just issuing from the church, but multitudes from surrounding districts as well. Whether he observed that custom on the morning in question is doubtful,

but the sermon was unusually terrifying, and made a deep and lasting impression on Williams's mind. "It was a morning," he writes many years after, "which I shall always remember, for it was then I heard the voice of heaven; I was apprehended as if by a warrant from on high." The result of the change was that Williams renounced the pursuit of medicine, and resolved upon devoting himself to serve religion. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of St. David's in 1740, and after serving in the Establishment for three years, was deprived of his license on account of his irregular zeal; and from that moment to the day of his death was an itinerant Methodist preacher. His sermons were of a mellow and edifying character, and sometimes rose to eloquence; but the chief service he rendered the revival, and the Principality at large, was by the extraordinary number of his hymns, the variety and excellence of which have won for him the designation of "The sweet singer of Wales."

In addition to the foregoing there were a few amongst the Nonconformist ministers who drank of the spirit of the revival, and helped to further the movement. The foremost position is undeniably due to the godly and laborious Edmund Jones, Independent minister, of Pontypool. He early co-operated with Harris, and survived him in the work for many years. It was by his invitation that Harris first exhorted in Monmouthshire in the spring of 1738. The visit gave great offence to Mr. David Perrott, incumbent of the parishes of Bedwellty and Mynyddislwyn. He wrote to express his surprise at the liberty taken in coming to his curacies, and warned Harris to recede, "or expect along with the person or persons who had sent for him that just resentment due for such unlawful practices."

The reformer gave no heed to the warning, but went on his way. At a short distance from one of the churches was a small elevation known as Tudor's Mound, concerning which a superstition existed, that a storm of thunder and lightning

would ensue the moment the mound was disturbed. This place was the rallying point for all the reckless youths of the neighbourhood, and was the centre of sport at the time Mr. Harris took his stand upon it to deliver his message. He reproved and denounced with unmerciful severity the revels of the day; but so besotted in ignorance were his hearers that the only conception they had of the sermon was that something terrible would happen if they did not alter their ways. It had however the desired effect. It filled them with alarm; they thought the mound was already in convulsions and the ground trembling beneath their feet. From that moment the games and wicked practices of the place vanished so entirely that the enemies of Harris could only account for his influence by putting it down to the power of enchantment.

During this his first excursion into Monmouthshire, Howell Harris was instrumental in reclaiming Philip Davies, who became a Nonconformist pastor; also Thomas Lewis and Morgan John Lewis, who took a similar course after labouring for years with the Methodists as exhorters. He visited this neighbourhood again about the end of the year; but his annoyance arose this time from another source. It came from those whom the Rev. Lewis Rees, wrote of as "the uneasy people, the Anabaptists."* The opposition of the Anabaptists was possibly an echo of the violent baptismal controversy that had been carried on some years before, and to which the decadence of spiritual religion in the South Wales counties was in some measure due. The divine breath was however now begining to pass over the country, and under the influence of its warmth we soon found members from the various sections of the Christian Church blending together to an extent not known before, and hardly known since.

There were a few other Nonconformist ministers besides Mr. Edmund Jones who rendered assistance. Unable to

* MS. letter from L. Rees, dated Jan. 20th, 1739.

cope with the wide-spread degeneracy, yet being good and worthy men, they hailed with joy the appearance of anyone who dared the task. One of them was Mr. David Williams, pastor of the Presbyterian Churches at Cardiff, and Watford near Caerphilly. He invited Harris to his neighbourhood, and hoped and prayed, engaging others to do the same, that a visit from him would turn to good account. Mr. Harris complied with the request, and went to Bwlchycwm and Maesdiofal during the Whitsun week of 1738. A short time afterwards he was expected at Aberdare, Llanwonno, Llantrisant, and St. Nicholas, but was prevented by illness, much to the disappointment of the crowds who were anxious to hear him. This is the first indisposition we meet with in the history of Harris; but it is the beginning of a series of illnesses that we shall have to record before recounting a total breakdown; and it may be regarded as the first premonition of those limits to human strength and power of endurance which it was the custom of his life to entirely overlook. The Rev. David Williams, another dissenting minister, sent him by one of Harris's own converts a letter of sympathy, dated June 12th, 1738. After mentioning that his non-appearance "had the more raised the desires and longings of thousands of souls," he goes on to describe the effect of a visit that Harris had previously made. Mr. Williams's plain words are more to the point than any rhetorical description of Harris's popularity at this period, and are, with one or two letters that follow, the most convincing proof of the effects of his tornado-like ministry.

"The two days' service with us," he says, "has been attended with marvellous success. The churches and meetings are crowded; Sabbath-breaking goes down, it is looked upon as a very abominable thing; dancing has been much interrupted; profane swearing and cock-fighting are exclaimed against. But you do not imagine that the devil is mute and still. No, he both speaks and acts; but I think there seems

to be more against him than for him in this part of the country. Your friends are more numerous than your adversaries; you are preached against in some places, but it turns to the reproach of them who attempt it. The devil is a lying spirit in the mouth of some to calumniate you to some of the gentry, in order to stir them up against you; and God is pleased again to remove the charge. Upon the whole I cannot forbear thinking, without any partiality, but that your coming here was from God; and that God himself, in the might and power of His Spirit, was pleased to come with you. I hope your useful life will be prolonged, and that God, by casting you down, is preparing you for greater service; and hope you will not lay down or alter your course while God thus visibly owns you. When Satan has failed of his end in ridiculing and threatening by his own devoted servants, who knows but that he may transform himself into an angel of light, and put some good and religious people upon dissuading of you, which the subtle serpent cannot but know to be the most effective way of working with you? But I pray God you may be taught to discern him in what way soever he acts. I hope that as soon as God shall restore you to health and strength, you will come to the places above mentioned; whether it be harvest time or any other time I think it will make not much difference, because people are so eager of hearing you. I intended to meet you as it was agreed upon, and had four or five places fixed upon to propose to you that wanted your service, were desirous of it, and also convenient; which I shall set before you when I shall next see you, which I hope shall not be long before you come to the above places. I hope you will think the account I have now given you to contain in it much the same voice as St. Paul heard in a vision, 'Come over to Macedonia, and help us.' If you are able to write, please do it with the bearer. My parents and all the family give their love and service to you, and pray for the restoration of your health, and the continuance of your

usefulness, as also does your very sincere friend and most humble servant,

DAVID WILLIAMS."

Two days after the date of the foregoing letter, Mr. Williams wrote again. "I hope," he says, "you recover and get strength continually. You are very much expected in these parts, and I hope you have growing inclinations to come. Here are still visible good effects of the late visit you made us. The last week of this instant, or the first beginning of the next, will be very convenient. The places in view, besides those that have been disappointed, are Llanedarn (from St. Nicholas there), thence to Machen, or Bassalleg, either of the two, as those concerned shall think most convenient; thence to our parish, where we shall think it most convenient. We talk of the bearer's house, but do not give him any absolute promise, that we may be at liberty to choose a more convenient place if we can. I am afraid the bearer, who has been a wild man, feels none of the pangs of the new birth: has such a flash, but hardly knows why? If you can have an opportunity, please talk close and home to him upon the nature of repentance and resignation. He lost opportunities which perhaps might have been of service to him. When you come here, I beg leave to dispose of you for two nights. The one will be near the gentlewoman's house I talked to you about, where I expect she will meet you; and the other is in a needful place, where you will be met by young people, some of whom have been wrought upon by what they heard from you, and still hopefully retain the impressions. I intend to have a meeting with some friends, but privately, to pray for the Divine assistance and blessing. I should have told you that you are expected from our parish to Gellygaer. The curate, who called the other night at our house, is for promoting it all he can; though he may act a little behind the curtains, being now about to receive priest's orders. He is the friendliest of all the clergy hereabout,

preaches with much life, and endeavours to do all the good he can in the parish. I would not advise you to anything prejudicial to the cause, which I hope I can say I have at heart, but I may tell you that you need not be so shy of conversing with Dissenters in these parts as in some other places, for, blessed be God, prejudice is falling off more and more here.

“Please to write by the bearer and fix the time. I earnestly desire a share in your prayers. I am sensible of the workings of the same enemy, self, which you complain much of, and which I fear more than the devil himself. That the God who inclined you to go thus abroad, and kept you from the cursed effects of Satan, and his agents’ malice, may do so still, and abundantly prosper your sincere and honest endeavours, are and shall be the real and fervent prayers of, dear sir, your most affectionate friend and humble servant,

“DAVID WILLIAMS.”

To the same purpose, as indicative of the effects of Harris’s preaching, are one or two letters he received about this time from Mr. Henry Davies, minister of the dissenting church at Blaengwrach, in the vale of Neath. Mr. Davies in his first letter expresses sympathy with Harris in his illness, and his pity at the disappointment of the ‘many thousands’ who had longed for his coming to the places appointed; and then in the second, under date July 28th, 1738, he says, “Loving and dear Brother,—Within this fortnight I have written to you before. That serious, zealous, and pious man, Mr. William Thomas, clergyman at Lantwit-juxta-Neath, is very desirous to see and to have your company. He came purposely to hear you at the Abbey, but was disappointed and many thousands more. He was reproved by a bitter clergyman who lives at Neath. The clergy are divided one against another in our parts. A captain of the cock matches, who heard you at Bettws, promises never to follow that wicked game any

longer, and another *dux omnium malorum*, near the seaside, cut off the heads of his fighting birds when he went home after he heard you. I have seen him last Lord's Day, and he appears a serious hearer. He invited me to his house. The praise is due to God alone. I find there is much reformation in many since you have been this way, which calls loudly upon you to come again as soon as possible. A great gentleman's lady, a lawyer below us, is very much for coming to hear you, and he is contrary. I believe the devil has lost some skilful soldiers, who have enlisted themselves to be faithful soldiers under the great captain, our Lord Jesus. Remember me dearly to Mr. William Herbert, and all enquiring christian friends. Oh pray that there would be more cannon sent to batter down the towers of Satan. I beg the help of your prayers and praises, and that the Lord would give more faith, humility, patience, and holy zeal. I love and long to see you.

"I rest your sincere friend, brother, and servant,

"HENRY DAVIES."

"P.S.—Favour me with a letter when you receive this, and let me know when you will come to our parts, and how the work of our great and good master, Jesus Christ, prospers in yours. Oh continue in prayer for your poor brother. I desire you to procure Mr. Griffith Jones's letters from Mr. Rowlands, and if you can, prevail with him to come to these parts to preach the everlasting gospel. I shall endeavour to have a letter of consent from one of our clergy if he will come. Give my love and service to him."

This last letter, and the postscript in particular, affords striking evidence, not only of the reforms effected by the ministry of Harris, but of the tendency of a religious awakening to merge every outward distinction into one high purpose and aim. The writer of the letter, Mr. Henry Davies, continued for many years on the friendliest terms with Harris,

and in one of his letters we find him desiring "your interest for a Welsh School near Aberpergwm." Mr. Harris about this time received other invitations from the Rev. James Davies, of Merthyr Tydvil, and from the Rev. Vavasor Griffiths, of Radnorshire; but the testimonies to the work he was now accomplishing must be closed with the following two or three short communications.

"Pwllypant, Oct. 17th, 1738.

"Dear Sir,—I hope this will find you well. The bearer has been very wild, but has reformed exceedingly. Since he heard you last in our parish he frequents every meeting about, both upon week-nights as well as Lord's Day. Meetings here are crowded. There be sixteen that have bespoke communion next time at Cardiff. Doors are opening in places not expected. Please to send me four or five hundred of Mr. Jones's last book, and two or three hundred of the first. We have a Welsh School going up. I have no time or convenience to draw up a formal petition to Mr. Jones, but if he will trust me with twenty shillings a quarter, for one half-year, it will be sincerely disposed of this way in the most prudent manner I shall be capable of. They are this way pretty eager to learn.

Yours, &c.,

"DAVID WILLIAMS"

"Pwllypant, Nov. 17th, 1738.

"My very dear Friend,—Things have a comfortable aspect here at present. Praying societies go up everywhere. Seventeen have been admitted to communion last time; more have been proposed. We have a large Welsh School, in which praying is come to be fashionable, and have a mind to put another up. It will be a great kindness if Mr. Jones will be pleased to bestow something of his bounty here. I don't see any of the clergy hereabout will act, save Mr. Thomas, of Gellygarw, whose wife and others of his people have been lately to hear me, and in return thereof many of our people

go to hear him next Lord's Day. They have lately put up a sermon at Whitchurch to oppose us; and endeavour to make the people believe it is the house of God, and that His presence and blessing can be expected nowhere else. I propose it, not only as my own earnest desire, but that also of many besides, to have a visit from you about Christmas; I do not mean you should stand out publick at that time of the year. Pray get me six hundred more of Mr. Jones's second book with all the speed you can. Send me as many as you have with the bearer. Present my humble service to Mr. Jones. Pray let me know what sort of Bibles those are which Mr. Jones has the offer of. Have they contents and marginal references?

Yours, &c.,

“DAVID WILLIAMS.”

“Pwllypant, Feb. 7th, 1739.

“Dear Sir,—Three societies now going on not far from Cardiff. The society in Cardiff present their love and service. We have received nine to our communion since you were here; and about so many more propose. I hope God has work for you to do in this country in the spring-time, more especially in Monmouthshire. There are calls for you; one by Newport town, all Welsh; the other by another town, Caerleon. I am their messenger to you. The societies meet at our house on Friday for prayer.

“DAVID WILLIAMS.”

The foregoing letters are important as revealing the early catholicity of Harris's spirit, and as showing the acclaim with which an undoubted man of God was hailed by the pious amongst all sects. Earnest churchmen rallied around him; whilst the zealous amongst the nonconformists offered up their prayers on his behalf, invited him to their several localities, and as a crowning acknowledgment of his undoubted right, in virtue of an inward impulse only, to reclaim the erring and reform the country, were pleased in their letters to dignify

him with a ministerial title, and address him as the Rev. Howell Harris.

In the meantime his converts were becoming numerous and his correspondents increasing. The following letters, showing the experience of his own heart, were written about this time.

“Trevecca, Oct. 24th, 1738.

“To Mr. H. G.”

“Dear Christian Friend,—I received your savoury letter last night, in which you make me see a cause for trembling and blushing in that you ask the advice and prayer of one so unfit for both. Oh that we could think of ourselves and others as we really are, vile and blind creatures. Oh that God would empty us of ourselves, and fill us with clearer sight and nobler ideas of His dear Son; how little would everything appear to us then; how sweet would revilings sound in our ears, while our eyes would be fixed on Jesus crucified. What are we that we should be counted worthy to suffer for His sake? Surely this is an honour which is above the reach of the carnal world, and which the King of heaven confers on but a few. Oh how humbly, then, should we lie at His feet admiring His free electing love, if in the least He distinguishes such poor vile worms as we are. Surely none stand in need of the prayers of prevailing saints as much as I do; therefore I desire that you would strive for me, that I may gain the conquest over self, my grand enemy,—that I may lie lower at my Saviour’s feet, accounting it my greatest honour if I should be thought worthy to be reviled for His sake.

“I hope you are admitted to have some cherishing smiles from Jesus. These will sweeten every affliction, temper all crosses, and season all the bitterest portions to us. Our dear Saviour is never dearer than when the battle is hottest. When enemies frown, ridicule, and threaten,—Oh, then, when the soul is humbled, the old man trampled under foot, and

faith kept in close exercise, how sweet is the private associating of sincere christian soldiers who join together to send up hearty cries at the throne of grace ! To have a fresh sight of the Captain will animate fainting souls. Oh ! that we were laid low enough in the dust, and truly unbottomed of self ; then could enemies without be little hindrance to us. But the great and willing Captain of salvation knows best how to marshal His army and exercise His soldiers. What we need examine most carefully is whether we are really and entirely His. I find a most deceitful heart within me,—now owning Him and promising great things, but which on trial will fail or betray me. I hope the main business of our acquaintance at home and abroad shall be to no other end but to encourage, caution, and try each other, that at last we may meet with the rest of the Lord's faithful servants. Surely there are rewards enough to make amends in a few moments for the labours, fatigues, crosses, persecutions, and troubles of many ages spent here. Let us hold on our way then, since we are assured we have such a Captain who will never leave us, and being also assured our labours are not in vain in the Lord. Oh, how greatly doth my soul rejoice that God should own you in such a particular manner as to make your house His palace for feeding His little ones, and yourself a father to the babes now left to the jaws of lions were it not for an invisible hand. I hope you will by no means drop it, if you reap any benefit by meeting together, for fear of that poor worm, man. I rather fear the policy of Satan working on the inward man. Pray think when you meet in future of the poor little flock hereabouts, and receive the sincere love and most affectionate wishes of your sincere friend in Christ,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“Trevecca, Nov. 21, 1738.

“To Mr. M. P., in Bristol.

“Dear Brother in Christ,—I am so hurried about that I can hardly spare time according to my wish to correspond

with my dearest friends. But now I have stolen a few minutes to send you this letter, and wish that it may meet you near the gates of the New Jerusalem, ravished with the sight of Jesu's infinite love. Oh that we could aim more at His glory here below, having our eyes and ears shut to the things of the world and the flesh. Oh that we had more of His humble, sincere, loving, and innocent spirit and nature; and that we could keep more close to Him, so that we should know more of Him, and be kept more tenderly affected towards His people, and be more humbly and prudently zealous and spiritually bold to stand up for Him against the raging villains and torrents of sin. Pray let us strengthen each other against this villain and enemy of souls, self. So likewise let us mutually assist each other to stir up our drowsy spirits so to talk, think of, and speak to this glorious Prince of Peace as is becoming in us towards so faithful, tender and loving, condescending and merciful a God and Redeemer. Let us not only act as moral men, but by our meek and innocent behaviour and mortifications, let us also convince the world that we have really our affections set on things above (Col. iii. 1, 2, 5, 13). Oh that we were all love to this dear Jesus; and also more heavenly, more on the wings of faith and less on the ground. All our conversation should be in heaven, for there is our dear Jesus. Oh let us not delight in any thing or place wherein we may not hope to meet our sweet Lord. Oh that we may know Him more; then would our hearts be drawn into more ardent desires after Him; we should be more lively and vigorous to labour for Him, and more cheerful to suffer and undergo all the hardships we should meet with in following Him. What would sufferings, ridicule, losses, hunger, and even death itself be while His Spirit assists us? When you are drawn nearest to the Throne, or go into the Presence Chamber, I beg you would think of me as one that am very ignorant of the word of God, and very negligent. I fear I have never learnt well to be

quite unbottomed of self; nor am I yet able to do all clearly to the glory of Him to whom all the glory is due. But my dear Redeemer has done wonderfully for me; yet I find it very difficult to come from under the **c**ovenant of works to that of grace; but this is yet within His power to accomplish or bring about. I have had some benefit from reading the "Sincere Convert," and Bunyan's "Law and Grace."

"I find Satan, by a spirit of bigotry in all parties as well as with us, has affected to do great mischief in many places among Christ's little flock, to embitter their spirit against others of a different persuasion, and diverting their thoughts from the substance to the shadow of religion. Oh how should our souls rejoice that our days are reforming days. There is a hopeful prospect in some places that would rejoice your soul. We have several societies, in this and other counties, of young people meeting together to pray and converse. Some are of a year's standing and some more. The clergy have opposed us, but God hath awakened some and made them able ministers of His truth.

"You have heard of the Rev. Mr. Griffith Jones, of Carmarthenshire; and the Rev. Mr. Rowlands, of Cardiganshire; and some other clergymen in this county who preach Christ powerfully. There is also in these parts a Baptist preacher that God has owned very much, together with some other dissenting ministers.

"Thus I have given you a hint how our King's interest prospers in Wales. Oh pray heartily in private and public that conviction may end in true conversion, and that we should not rest till we have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and increase in all the increase of God.

"I am, your most affectionate, hearty well-wisher,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

CHAPTER VI.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

THE countenance accorded Howell Harris in the prosecution of his work by the godly of all sects was undoubtedly a source of consolation; but it failed, notwithstanding his unflagging activity, to allay a certain uneasiness which he had concerning the rightfulness of his itinerant and unauthorized method of procedure; and it must have been an additional comfort whenever a new voice came to cheer him in his work. Such a comfort was now forthcoming. "About this time," he writes, "I heard by a friend that came from London of a young clergyman, namely, Mr. Whitfield, that preached four times a day and was much blessed. On hearing this my heart was united to him in such a manner that I never felt the like connection with anyone before; but yet I had not the least prospect of ever seeing him, being informed that he had gone beyond the sea, it being his first voyage to America. But about the end of 1738 I was agreeably surprised by a letter from him. He having providentially heard of me, wrote to encourage me to go on." The letter Mr. Whitfield sent was dated London, December 20th, 1738, and was to the following effect:

"My Dear Brother,—Though I am unknown to you in person, yet I have long been united to you in spirit, and have been rejoiced to hear how the good pleasure of the Lord hath prospered in your hands. Go on, my dear brother, go on; be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might; and

the spirit of Christ and of glory shall rest upon you most effectually; which has opened, and is still opening doors before you, for preaching the everlasting Gospel. There have been and will be many adversaries; yet be not afraid. He that sent you will assist, comfort, and protect you, and make you more than conqueror through His great love. I am a living monument of this truth; for the divine strength has been often magnified in my weakness; I have tasted that the Lord is gracious; I have felt His power; and from mine own experience can say that in doing or suffering the will of Jesus Christ there is great reward. Blessed be His holy name, there seems to be a great out-pouring of the spirit in London; and we walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost and are edified. You see, my dear brother, the freedom I have taken in writing to you; if you would favour me with a line or two by way of answer you would really rejoice both me and many others; why should we not tell one another what God has done for our souls? My dear brother, I love you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and wish you may be the spiritual father of thousands, and shine as the sun in the firmament in the kingdom of our heavenly Father. My hearty love to Mr. Jones. Oh, how shall I joy to meet you at the judgment-seat of Christ. How could you honour me, if you could send a line to your affectionate, though unworthy brother in Christ,

“GEORGE WHITFIELD.”

To the foregoing warm-hearted salutation Mr. Harris sent the following reply :

“Glamorgan, Jan. 8th, 1739.

“Dear Brother,—I was most agreeably surprised last night by a letter from you. The character you bear, the spirit that is seen and felt in your work, and the close union of my soul to yours will not allow me to use any apology in my return to you. Though this is the first time of our correspondence, yet I can assure you I am no stranger to you.

When I first heard of you, and your labours, and success, my soul was united to you, and engaged to send addresses to heaven on your behalf. When I read your diary I had some uncommon influence of the divine presence shining on my poor soul almost continually, and my soul was in an uncommon manner drawn out on your account ; but I little thought our good Lord and Master intended I should ever see your handwriting. I hope we shall be taught more and more to admire the wonderful goodness of God in his acts of free grace. Surely no person is under such obligation to advance the glory of free grace as this poor prodigal. But alas, how little sense of all his wonderful blessings is in my soul ! Pray for me that my heart may be drawn out more in love and praise to Him.

“ Oh, how ravishing it is to hear of such demonstrations of the divine love and favour to London. And to make your joy greater still, I have some good news to send you from Wales. There is a great revival in Cardiganshire, through one Mr. D. Rowlands, a church minister, who has been much owned and blessed in Carmarthenshire also. We have also a sweet prospect in Breconshire, and part of Monmouthshire. And the revival prospers in this county where I am now. There is also here a very useful young dissenting minister, who is a man of great charity. There is another of the same character in Montgomeryshire. Some shining beams of the gospel appear there. There are two or three young curates in Glamorganshire who are well-wishers to the cause of God ; and we have an exceedingly sweet and valuable clergyman in Breconshire. But enemies are many and powerful ; I therefore beg you and your friends would pray that God would stand up for His cause against all His enemies.

“ I hint this in general, as I could not testify my love any way more agreeable to your soul than to let you know how the interest of our good, gracious, and dear Saviour Jesus Christ prospers in these parts. Oh that I had more love in

my soul, more humble zeal, and spiritual boldness. Surely I should blush to think the name of such an ignorant, negligent, unprofitable servant should reach your ears. I fear by reason of the relics of self, and pride, which I find still alive. I rejoice, on the other hand, and bless God that he inclined you to write to me, and especially for making your letter so savoury and reviving to my fainting soul. Oh that we could do more for so kind and loving a Master,—that His very enemies by seeing our christian love, behaviour and fruitfulness, may be brought to think well of the ways of the Redeemer, and to glorify Him. I am in a great hurry, as I am called away to discourse very soon; but I could not miss this opportunity of obliging you; and were you to come to Wales I trust it would not be labour in vain. I hope the faithful account I have given you will excite you to send again to him that would be sincerely yours in Christ, whilst—

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

The cordial spirit of the reply thus sent by Harris was grateful to the heart of Whitfield. “Mr. Howell Harris and I are correspondents,” he wrote; “blessed be God! May I follow him as he does Jesus Christ! How he outstrips me!”* The acquaintance thus formed was also encouraging to Harris himself, and the countenance of Whitfield served to diminish the misgiving, which at every new stage in his career was passing away, eventually to disappear altogether. Referring to this period he says,—“Thus I went on, having sweet fellowship with God daily in private prayer, and at the sacrament, which I constantly attended. Yet still being not fully settled as to my method of proceeding, I was shaken by Satan, and by a sense of the greatness of the work, and of my own weakness and incapacity for it; but still I was constrained to go on by the importunity of the generality of the people, and by the visible good tendency of my labours, and the united call and approbation of many whom I esteemed as

* “Life of Whitfield,” by Tyerman, part I. p. 163.

gracious ministers, and by the continual power I felt with me in the work. Thus my spirit was much enlivened, especially when in the Lord's work, and I feared neither men nor devils. Such power and courage I had not by nature, therefore it appeared to me to be undoubtedly supernatural and from God.

"As to the subject of my discourse, it was all given me in an extraordinary manner, without the least pre-meditation. It was not the fruit of my memory; for naturally my memory was bad; therefore it was the effect of the immediate strong impulse which I felt in my soul; I was not able to rest; consequently necessity was laid on my spirit to go and awaken souls. Thus I went on, though with fear and trembling, lest others of bad intentions should take occasion to go about after my example; therefore I prayed that I might know God's will more perfectly, whether He was the only object of my love and desire, and whether His glory and the salvation of my fellow-sinners were the only objects of my view. And after examining the matter thus, I had power to rely in all things on the strength of the grace that is in Christ Jesus for power to carry me through the great work, and that if His honour should call me to suffer, to be imprisoned and tortured, I should find Him a faithful friend in every trial, in death, and to all eternity.

"By this time the Rev. Mr. Rowlands and some other young clergymen were called in Wales to preach the gospel in the same extemporary manner as I was.

"Thus, although I had many comfortable assurances that my commission was from above, yet I was not thoroughly confirmed about it in my own heart until I was summoned to appear before a person of distinction, to render an account of my going about in the manner I did; then these words were brought with power to my soul, from Rev. iii. 7, 8, 'Behold I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it.' By the gracious effect this left on my soul, I am confirmed and persuaded it was applied to me by the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER VII.

NORTH WALES.

IT was about this time, February 1739, that Howell Harris made his first visit to North Wales. The journey was undertaken on account of the representations made to him by Mr. Lewis Rees, and at the latter's invitation. Mr. Rees had been induced to settle as pastor of the Nonconformist Church at Llanbryn-mair, Montgomeryshire, at the earnest request of the pious Edmund Jones, who proposed to accompany him to the place and introduce him to the people. Mr. Jones, in his visits to the Northern counties, had been pained by the destitute condition of the inhabitants, and a similar experience awaited Mr. Rees upon his settlement amongst them. The people of those counties were steeped in ignorance and vice ; and a spiritual darkness and torpor was spread over the land that was entirely undisturbed by the pastors of the Establishment, who were as indifferent and dead as the people themselves, and far too concerned about their personal ease to rouse the spirit of antagonism by interfering with the amusements of the people. They chose rather to identify themselves, on the mingled conditions of patronage and comradeship, with all the diversions of their flocks.

A few men of ability had appeared about a century prior to the time of this history, such as Walter Craddock, Vavasor Powell, Morgan Llwyd, Henry Maurice, Ambrose Mostyn, Hugh Owen, James Owen, and others.

These remarkable men by their labours had succeeded in

partially awakening the nation ; but like a slumbering man that is but ineffectually disturbed it sank back again into a profounder repose, and left no trace of the shaking it had experienced save the few pious souls that composed the half dozen Nonconformist churches of the Province. Those churches were by this time in so declining a state that they produced no perceptible diminution of the profanity and Sabbath-breaking and every manner of vice that prevailed.* Mr. Rees took greatly to heart the benighted condition of the people, and laboured successfully amongst them. He also rendered signal service by bringing others of greater power than himself to the field, such as Mr. Jenkin Morgan, one of the most able and devoted of Mr. Griffith Jones's schoolmasters, and in particular the flaming reformer from the secluded hamlet of Trevecca.

Writing from Gwaelodywaun, January 20, 1739, he informs Mr. Harris that he was about to call at Tredustan, near Trevecca, on his way home, and requests Mr. Harris to accompany him on a visit to Montgomeryshire. Mr. Rees, however, proceeded alone, and Harris followed in a few days. On the first of February he arrived at Builth. He found the people waiting and employing their time in singing, while a young gentleman sought to create a disturbance by dragging about a dead cat. Mr. Harris had great power in his discourse, and was only anxious "to be more swallowed up in God—acting from God in him, and to and for God." He retired to rest that night at one o'clock.

The following day, February 2, he travelled ten miles in the direction of Garth, where he hoped to see Mr. M. Gwynn ; preached twice, wrote letters as usual, and retired to rest at four in the morning, with the result that the next day, Feb. 3, when we find him in the border town of Rhayader after he had travelled six miles, he was exceedingly exhausted ; but sustained by a lofty and determined purpose, he felt *that*

* "Nonconformity in Wales," by T. Rees, p. 413.

“within, which when put to action makes me almost indefatigable.”

The day of his arrival at Rhayader he conducted family worship twice, preached twice, wrote half-a-dozen letters, and then in the evening was visited by a kind-hearted friend, who had come purposely to warn him, that if he crossed into the County of Montgomery arrangements had been made for his apprehension. This friend also cheered him with the following passage of Scripture: “Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror neither be troubled.” (1 Peter iii. 13, 14.) In the full spirit of these words he describes the information he had received as agreeable news, and with an utter contempt of danger he adds, “May the Lord cover my head in the day of battle.” “To-morrow,” he continues, “I go to a feast at Cwm-ty-dwr, and to-morrow night into part of Montgomeryshire.” Two days later, viz., Feb 5th, there is a letter of his written from Llanbister referring to his attack upon the revel.

“Yesterday,” he writes, “was a glorious day: I was at a great feast, and chose to oppose the devil on his own ground; and so I discoursed within a few yards of a public house, where the diversion was to be. At first I was strongest; but at length, while discoursing on the conversion of Zaccheus, and endeavouring to draw them by love, I lost my authority; it was dead and dry, until, near the end, the Lord did lift up my voice like a trumpet, and enabled me to declare home about the Lord’s enemies. I never tasted more power. I believe some were cut through; many wept, and one fainted; others felt a great trembling, and all were filled with awe. There being a funeral, I went to Church, and when we came out I feared the devil would bring them to the snare; so I told them I would discourse in the town of Rhayader, a quarter of a mile off, and there they came I believe almost all. I was enabled to discourse with less thundering and more consolation. There

was no interruption, though Satan made many attempts, but all in vain : God baffled him. From thence I went to a place called Lodge, in Llandinam, Montgomeryshire, where I was enabled to discourse with power. Last night and to-day I met with no opposition ; many are deterred from coming to hear by a report passing for truth, that I really correspond with the King of Spain, and that £40 are offered for taking me ! To-morrow I expect to be taken, and if I am I will write immediately from my new lodging. I feel a necessity laid upon me, to beg of my dear friend to leave no stone unturned for God. I hope a great work will go on in this country, but it will cost some battles with Satan first. May the Lord arm me in the day of battle, and cover my head. I know that you are acting your post in your own person according to the power given you. Be diligent and bold ; yield not to unbelief, but when you are blocked up, so that you can see no way to escape, then stand still, and see the salvation of God. A time will come upon you when you shall see all your striving and work to consist in an inward waiting and ceasing from work. This is to nature foolishness, but we must feel it, so that our souls shall be obliged to say, ‘ Lord, thou must do all in and for me : I am nothing and can do nothing ; it is thy free grace to work faith, repentance, love, humility, meekness, zeal ; and it is thine again and not mine—in thy power and not in my power—to exercise these.’ ‘ The wind bloweth where it listeth.’ ‘ I chose you and not you me,’ was what our Saviour was obliged to put his disciples in mind of. The old root will soon grow in us. It is hard to come quite out of ourselves to Christ ; to despair in ourselves and to trust in another is a work all above nature. Praise God for every—the least—tenderness in your heart towards God, every—the least—discovery of Himself, of His Son, and of His love, and every longing for him. I find myself often so chained up that I have no more light, love, life, desire for God than a stone, but am hard, dry, dead, dull, drowsy, and so

would remain for ever were it not for free grace that comes and takes me up. I see that the more we are persuaded by the Holy Spirit of God's love to us, the far stronger will be our love to Him. If I am taken I think it right to go to prison; if I am not taken I am almost persuaded to stay in this country for a fortnight longer. Pray that I may know the Lord's voice, that I may not go without Him or before Him. We ought to pray that the Holy Remembrancer should bring it to our thoughts in all our actions to ask, Is this my will or God's will? Is this done by my wisdom or by the wisdom of God? I am now in a very great hurry, having places to discourse in to-day before night, and have near twelve miles to go."

On the direct route Mr. Harris now proposed to take was the town of Llanidloes. Mr. Robert Jones, in *Drych yr Amseroedd*, informs us that Harris's first visit to this town was made without molestation; a fact which may possibly be accounted for by a circumstance which, while it shows an instance of individual moderation, serves to reveal at the same time the deplorable state of the country in religion and morals. A number of gentlemen from the town and neighbourhood had met together at an inn, when the conversation turned upon the action of men who traversed the country in contravention of all order, disturbing the peace of localities, and driving men mad with their frantic denunciation. An old gentleman of the company, by name Mr. Jenkin Lloyd, a justice of the peace, and a man of considerable influence, stood up on his feet, and checked the virulence of their abuse by remarking, that they were all aware of the shameful irregularity of their own clergymen. He then instanced the immorality of several of the ministers of the surrounding parishes, and concluded by asking whether it was surprising, in the face of such proceedings, that strangers should be moved to pity their destitution and declare to the people the unvarnished truth.

It was during this journey he visited Trefeglwys, and was the means of conversion to one Lewis Evan, of Llanllugan, a Christian who maintained a constant and useful profession to the end of his life in the face of bitter opposition and suffering.

Continuing his journey, Mr. Harris meets, on the 8th of the month, with his friend Mr. Lewis Rees, who had probably now returned to give him welcome; that evening he preached to a thousand people in the parish of Llan——— with greater power than he had hitherto experienced. "The power of God was there in a remarkable manner. You might have heard hearts broken into shivers; and such groanings and tears and crying that I had never heard the like. Many hearts were, I trust, opened for Christ. I was borne as it were beyond myself. Praise God for me."

The parish of which the name was left unfinished in the manuscript of Mr. Harris was probably that of Llandinam; and here, from amongst the thousand people who had congregated, a considerable number, some of them being persons of respectability and competence, were moved to bow to the Gospel authority, and to place their houses and substance at the service of the great revival.

Passing on without any opposition to Llanbrynmair, he met with so much success that he believed his coming there was from God. "There is a great work," he writes, "to be accomplished in this place. I have deferred the intention of going to Pembrokeshire, believing that the Lord has work for me here. They live here like brutes, knowing nothing. I believe Welsh schools will be set up here. Satan's kingdom shakes, and I hope the King of Glory is getting himself the victory."

At Llanbrynmair he took his stand to preach near a public house that was known as the Cock, a name that was afterwards changed to Wynnstay Arms. The intensity and force of his religious convictions and experience at this early period

in his life may be gathered from the fact that a rumour had preceded him, that he was a man who had seen a vision, and that his object in traversing the country was to declare to the people what he had supernaturally heard and witnessed. Mr. Hughes in his *Methodistiaeth Cymru* is of opinion that the rumour was an advantage rather than otherwise, as it tended to work upon the superstition of a people who could not be operated upon by any other motive. Amongst the men who heard him at Llanbrynmair were three brothers, William, Edward, and Richard Howell, and another person of the name of Richard Humphrey. These men, for the convenience of hearing at the same time that they consulted their ease, were lolling on the roof of a low cottage hard by. It was no vision, however, that the stranger from South Wales had to declare, but stern and awful reality. He denounced the sins of the age, and in his own peculiar manner thrust home so terribly at the consciences of the men that they thought he had come there with a knowledge of their deeds, and were so stung at heart that their ludicrous position on the roof of the house became intolerable, and they descended with shame and contrition. They afterwards joined a few men like-minded with themselves in the formation of a small society, which was the first-fruit of Calvinistic Methodism in North Wales, and in connection with which they were useful to the end of their days.

The progress of Mr. Harris on his first journey to North Wales was hitherto unopposed, and he thought the circumstance an omen that Satan had been bound. He had, however, no sooner left Llanbrynmair for Cemmaes, than the premonition of the friend who had come to Rhayader to warn him proved itself too true, and a storm of violent persecution from high and low, headed by a justice of the peace of the name of Wynne, now burst upon him. Referring to the circumstance in his autobiography he says, "My life was now in danger in several places on account of the mob. They

found I could not be prosecuted as a rioter because it did not appear that I disturbed the peace. Yet in Montgomeryshire a knight, a clergyman, and two justices, while I was discoursing, came attended by a constable with the mob, and took cognizance of me and such as met together to hear my exhortation in a place unlicensed; and they began to charge me with a breach of the Conventicle Act. I told the magistrate that I was a conformist, and for that reason not subject to the penalties of that statute; at which they said they would consult the best lawyers in order to know if there is not a law that could be enforced against me, and if there was that I should expect to suffer its extreme penalty." Mr. Harris had no sooner left the presence of these magistrates than, "being filled with courage by the Lord," he returned to the spot where he had been disturbed, and began again addressing his audience, now moved to tears, upon the duty of being firm in the day of trial. The persecutors of Harris continued to threaten until the Session came on, and then after consulting a legal authority they thought proper to allow the case to drop. "The great Benefactor," said Mr. Lewis Rees, when he wrote an account of the affair to Harris, "pleaded your case in the consciences of your adversaries."

Passing on from Cemmaes on the 12th of the month, Harris was further roughly handled; after travelling that day twelve miles, during the stages of which he preached twice, was severely hustled and beaten, was followed by a gang of youths who cried, "Down with the Roundheads," received handfuls of mud from a woman who called him a "damned devil," and was hounded by dogs, he arrived at Llanuwchllyn, a considerable village amongst the mountains of Merionethshire. At this place he lost no time in making known the object of his coming, delivered his message, to the conversion of some of the hearers, from the top of a hedge, and then proceeded as usual to write his letters, from one of which the foregoing particulars are extracted.

The small town which derives its name from or imparts it to the lake of Bala, is situated at the other extremity of that beautiful sheet of water, and is four miles distant from the village of Llanuwchllyn. As this was the place Mr. Harris visited next, and formed the limit of his northward journey on the present occasion, it is proper that a further description be given of the low state of religion in the counties of the North, and in the neighbourhood of Bala in particular. From the account elicited by the Rev. Thomas Charles from the venerable John Evans of that town, it would seem that the time was one of appalling spiritual darkness. "Bibles were very scarce; hardly any of the lower ranks could read at all; and the customs of the country were very corrupt and immoral. In this respect there was no difference between gentle and simple, layman and clergyman. Gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness like a torrent overran the land; nor were the doctrines and precepts of the churches but dark and feeble to counteract these evils. From the pulpit the name of the Redeemer was hardly ever heard; nor was much mention made of the natural sinfulness of man, nor of the influence of the Holy Spirit. On Sunday mornings the poor were more constant in their attendance at church than the gentry; but the Sunday afternoons were spent by all in idle amusements. Almost every Sabbath there were sports in some part of the district. In these the young men of the neighbourhood had a trial of strength, and the people assembled from the surrounding country to see their feats. On Saturday nights, particularly in the summer, the young men and maids held what they called musical evenings—that is, they met together and diverted themselves by singing in turns to the harp, and by dancing till the dawn of the morning."* It can be easily imagined that after the Saturday night spent in this godless fashion there was but little preparation for, if there was not a positive repugnance towards, anything of a sacred character on the following day.

* "Trysorfa Ysbrydol" (Spiritual Treasury), 1799, pp. 30, 31.

But to continue with the old minister's account. "In the town of Bala they used to employ the Sundays in the public houses, dancing and singing, or in playing tennis against the town hall, and other games. In every corner of the town some sport or other went on till the light of the Sabbath day had faded away. In the summer, interludes (a kind of rustic drama) were performed on the table of the town hall, gentlemen and peasants sharing the diversion together, to the utter profanation of the sacred day. A set of vagabonds who were of corrupt and beastly habits used to traverse the country, begging, and doing worse things with impunity, to the disgrace of the officers for allowing them. With regard to true religion and godliness, if they are known by their fruits, there was hardly any, at all events as far as I could perceive."

The spiritual darkness was in some measure relieved by the presence in Bala of a small Nonconforming congregation, which had existed since the days of Mr. Hugh Owen, of Bronyclydwr.* This congregation was in a declining condition, but the piety of the members was evidenced to John Evans by the simplicity and soberness of the worshippers, the propriety of their conduct in every situation, and the violent hatred with which they were regarded by the godless rabble of the place.

The opposition of this rabble was held in restraint when Howell Harris paid his first visit to the town. The rumour had gone before, that the man from South Wales who had seen a vision was coming; and in the expectation that he had some wonders to relate, he was allowed to preach unmolested near the pine end of the public hall, and several from the town as well as from the surrounding country were made serious by what he declared. Some, however, were inclined for mischief, and tried to interrupt by mockery, and one sought to create a disturbance by twice firing a gun behind Harris's back; but the full fury of the enemies of religion was

* "Nonconformity in Wales," by T. Rees, p. 414.

only held in check till the occasion of his next visit to the town. The account of that visit must be deferred to its proper place, while for the present his course is retraced to his home in the South.

“In my return,” he writes, “I came by Dinas Mawddwy and discoursed there; and at the request of a friend I went on to Machynlleth. But at my first entrance there I found none were disposed to receive me. However, I proposed to preach the gospel to such as met in the street, being placed in an open window or door in an upper room; but I was soon obliged to desist by the noise of the multitude, who continued hallooing, threatening, swearing, and flinging stones or anything they could lay their hands on; and especially by an attorney’s coming up to me with such rage and fury in his looks, and his mouth so full of the language of hell as if his name had been Legion, and with him a gentleman and a clergyman in the same spirit and language, to head the mob. One of them discharged a pistol at me; I received no hurt, but was obliged to go among them into the street, not expecting that I should escape alive, seeing every circumstance threatened me with death; but my hour was not yet come. Though they used me so ill yet I was miraculously preserved, and at last one of the mob was disposed to fetch my horse, and as soon as I mounted they observed which way I went and crossed my road, and began again to throw sticks and stones at me, till the Lord delivered me out of their hands. By these means, and many other trials which I often passed through, I was at length so accustomed to them that when I arose in the morning I was daily in expectation of my crosses and trials. I became more acquainted with the world and myself, and could attest by my own experience the truth of that expression, which at first seems harsh, namely, that ‘man is a mixture of beast and devil.’”

After leaving Machynlleth Mr. Harris again called at Llanbryn-mair, preaching four times on his way thither, and

retired to rest at three o'clock in the morning. In a letter he wrote he speaks of the darkness of the people as being such that "it could be felt." "Almost the whole country seems under a curse, and most if not all the gentlemen are enemies." Some of those gentry continued their opposition as long as they lived, particularly Dr. Edwards, the vicar of Machynlleth, who though in many respects a kind neighbour continued to persecute the revivalists, and in his pulpit utterances would frequently denounce them with repeated emphasis as 'those wicked Methodists.' The attorney, however, who was a brother to the vicar, and whose looks and language were at the first so demoniacal, was led to relent. Being convinced of the excellence of the new religionists by the industry and uprightness of a maid-servant in his family, he was pleased, more than forty years from the time he led the foul onset on Mr. Harris, to lease to the now increasing congregation a house in which to conduct their public services." *

Mr. Harris was now in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and as matters go with public characters he might still be denominated a young man. But the picture he presents is that of a person with a naturally massive frame and herculean strength, so worn down by incessant labour night and day that frequently when he went before a congregation he could hardly stand on account of his weakness. To the eye of the observer his ministrations appeared as powerful and effective as ever, for it was a custom with him under such circumstances to plead mentally the promise which runs: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not be faint," (Isaiah 50. 31); and then the deeps of his soul were stirred, the languid eye would flash again, and the voice would ring. "I presently felt by faith instantaneous strength sufficient for my soul and body to carry me through my work. Yea, I felt it as really

* "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 124.

as ever I have felt the benefit of food when hungry, or the warmth of fire when cold."

Consequent upon this visit to North Wales, or perhaps anticipatory of another visit, was the following letter, which was directed to Mr. Howell Harris at the Lodge, near Llandinam.

"Aug. 2, 1739.

"Mr. Harris,

"As we have a regular ministry among us in the Church Establishment, whose abilities to dispense the word have been examined and approved by their Diocesans, whom you must own to be competent judges of literature; and as I am a lawful though unworthy minister of this parish I should be glad to understand your credentials, and to know by what authority you take upon you to preach within my district, and without condescending to the good manners of asking my consent. If you have received episcopal ordination you are welcome to exercise your (calling) in my church as an orthodox divine. If your education has been contrary, whether you personate the Presbyterian, the Anabaptist, the Independent, or the Quaker, you will easily find proper Conventicles protected by the indulgence and clemency of a mild government, where you may exercise to the applause of your party till you come to a better way of thinking; but your ascending your unhallowed rostrums in the highways, and in open fields, and your asserting that every place, suppose a dunghill or a stable, is equally consecrated with the Church for the service of God, can be with no other design but to trample upon the sacred altar, and to unravel the whole Scripture concerning the publick places of divine worship." Here follow some remarks about illusions, counterfeits, Uzza, Nadab, and Abihu, after which the letter proceeds,—“But perhaps you make no such encroachments, your design being only to refine upon the faults of the clergy, as you think you have better parts, and greater abilities. I believe the clergy don't envy

you in either ; and for my part may a mitre, if you desire it, be the reward of your merit. I should leave you for ever in enjoyment of your fond opinion of yourself, did not the regard I owe to the eternal welfare of my parishioners oblige me to desire you, in an amicable way, not to sound your trumpet in so unwarrantable a manner, both contrary to the laws of God and man, any more in my parish ; assuring you that your rigid way of exhorting, and of pouring out the vials of God's wrath so peremptorily upon the ignorant hearers with your extempore effusions, has not only seduced several in mine and the neighbouring parishes to live, and end their days it is to be feared, under the guilt of schism, but what I can't mention without horror, you have left several in a state of despair or with little hopes of mercy ; and should they die in that condition, how far you will be accessary to their eternal ruin I must leave God to judge ; and in the meantime must pray for the peace of our Jerusalem, to unite us all in the true faith of Christ.

“ Pardon this from your well-wisher, though unacquainted,

“ JOHN TILSBURY (or GILSLEY).”

CHAPTER VIII.

HARRIS AND WHITFIELD.

THE expression of the irate clergyman whose letter closes the last chapter is an apt description of Harris's preaching at this period. It was a veritable pouring out of the vials of God's wrath. He had conceived an uncompromising antipathy to sin, and in the name of his God he had sworn to put it down. With this spirit and purpose he proceeded immediately after his return from North Wales to make a short excursion through all the counties of the South. Passing by way of Cardigan, Pembroke, and Carmarthen, he arrived at Neath, in the county of Glamorgan. A meeting he conducted just outside this town was the means of conversion to some of the hearers; but a number of roughs from the neighbourhood could not allow the occasion to pass without indulging their propensity for sport, at the same time that they exhibited their enmity to religion by the inhuman method of tying an instrument of torture to the tail of a cat and sending the terrified creature into the midst of the people.*

It had been the wish of the Rev. George Whitfield, who had already encouraged Mr. Harris by his correspondence, and now contemplated a journey to Wales, that they should meet one another at the town of Neath, and he had written to that effect from Bristol, February 20th, 1739; but Mr. Harris had pressed forward on his journey and had the gratification of seeing Mr. Whitfield for the first time at Cardiff, March 7, 1739. They met just after Mr. Whitfield had been preaching

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," iii. 41.

in the Town Hall from the judge's seat. They needed no preliminary conversation, but descended at once upon the themes that were uppermost by Mr. Whitfield's asking, "Do you know that your sins are forgiven?" "The question rather surprised me," wrote Harris, "having never heard it asked before." The experience implied, however, was no new thing, for he adds,—“Mr. Whitfield was enjoying full assurance, as I did the first year.”* The impression made upon the mind of Whitfield, and his estimate of his new acquaintance, who was destined from this moment to be his warmest friend, may be seen from the following extract from his journal.

“After I came from the seat I was much refreshed by the sight of my dear brother Howell Harris, whom though I knew not in person I have long since loved in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and have often felt my soul drawn out in prayers on his behalf. A burning and shining light has he been in those parts,—a barrier against profaneness and immorality, and an indefatigable promoter of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. About three or four years ago God has inclined him to go about doing good. He is now above twenty-five years of age. Twice he has applied, being every way qualified, for Holy Orders, but was refused under the false pretence that he was not of age, though he was then twenty-two years and six months. About a month ago he offered himself again, but was put off. Upon this he was and is still resolved to go on in his work; and indefatigable zeal has he shown in his Master's service. For three years, as he told me from his own mouth, he has discoursed almost twice every day for three or four hours together; not authoritatively as a minister, but as a private person exhorting his Christian brethren. He has been I think in seven counties, and has made it his business to go to wakes, to turn people from such lying vanities. Many alehouse people, fiddlers, harpers, Demetrius-

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 43.

like, sadly cry out against him for spoiling their business. He has been made the subject of many sermons, and has been threatened with public prosecution; constables have been sent to apprehend him. But God has blessed him with inflexible courage; instantaneous strength has been communicated to him from above, and he continues to go on from conquering to conquer. He is of a most catholic spirit; loves all that love our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore he is styled by bigots a Dissenter. He is condemned by all that are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; but God has greatly blessed his pious endeavours. Many call and own him as their spiritual father, and I believe would lay down their lives for his sake. He discourses generally in a field, from a wall or a table, or anything else, but at other times in a house. He has established nearly thirty societies in South Wales, and still his sphere of action is daily enlarged. He is full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost.

“When I first saw him my heart was closely knit to him. I wanted to catch some of his fire, and give him the right hand of fellowship with my whole heart. After I had saluted him, and given a warm exhortation to a great number of people who followed us to the inn, we spent the remainder of the evening in taking sweet counsel together, and telling one another what God had done for our souls. My heart was still drawn out towards him more and more. A divine and strong sympathy appeared to be between us, and I was resolved to promote his interest with all my might. Accordingly we took an account of the several societies, and agreed on such measures as seemed most conducive to promote the common interest of our Lord. Blessed be God, there seems to be a noble spirit gone out into Wales; and I believe, ere long, there will be more visible fruits of it. What inclines me strongly to think so is, that the partition wall of bigotry and party zeal is broken down, and ministers and teachers of different communions join with one heart and one mind to

carry on the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The Lord make all the Christian world thus minded. For until this is done I fear we must despair of any great reformation in the Church of God. After much comfortable and encouraging conversation with each other, we kneeled down and prayed, and great enlargement of heart God was pleased to give me in that duty. This done, we ate a little supper, and then after singing a hymn we went to bed, praising and blessing God for bringing us face to face. I doubted not but that Satan envied our happiness. But I hope by the help of God we shall make his kingdom shake. God loves to do great things by weak instruments, that the power may be of God and not of man."

The meeting of these two remarkable men thus affectionately described was the beginning of a life-long and uninterrupted friendship. When Whitfield preached next morning at the Cardiff Town Hall, Howell Harris sat at his side; and in about a month after the meeting at Cardiff, that is April 4th, we find them together again for a few days on a preaching excursion in Monmouthshire, Mr. Whitfield delivering himself in English, and Mr. Harris, coming after him in such places as a layman was permitted to preach in, in Welsh. "At Usk," writes Mr. Whitfield, "the pulpit being denied, I preached upon a table under a large tree to some hundreds, and God was with us of a truth. On my way to Pontypool I was informed by a man that heard it that Counsellor H—— did me the honour to make a public motion to Judge P—— to stop me and brother Howell Harris from going about teaching the people. Poor man! He put me in mind of Tertullus in the Acts; but my hour is not yet come. I have scarce begun my testimony. For my finishing it my enemies must have power over me from above; Lord prepare me for that hour."

From Pontypool they went forward the next day to Abergavenny, accompanied by thirty horsemen, in a way that

reminded Whitfield of nothing so much as of Joshua going from city to city to subdue the devoted nations. They had been led to fear a disturbance at this latter place, but God impressed an awe upon all; so that although there were many opposers no one dared to utter a word: and then the friends retired, Whitfield and Harris, and together they sang a hymn. When they arose the next morning, April 6th, they continued their journey to Caerleon, "a town famous for having thirty British kings buried in it, and producing three martyrs." They were accompanied to this place by between sixty and seventy horsemen; and when they arrived Mr. Whitfield, according to the *Gloucester Journal* of April 24th, 1739, "preached in a field, from a pulpit built for the famous Mr. Howell Harris."* "I chose particularly," writes Whitfield, "to come hither because when Howell Harris was here last some of the baser sort beat a drum and huzzaed around him to disturb him. Many thousands came to hear, but God suffered them not to move a tongue although I was in the very same place; and I prayed for Howell Harris by name, as I do in every place where I have preached in Wales. I was carried beyond myself. Oh, that the love of Christ would melt them down. In the afternoon we went to Trelech, ten miles from Caerleon, where I preached from the horse block before the inn."

Acquaintance and friendship with Whitfield was a gratification to Harris, and doubtless a means of encouragement. But the benefit was mutual. The greater intrepidity of the Welsh Reformer on one occasion came to Whitfield's relief. Being near Bristol together, Mr. Whitfield was greatly annoyed in his preaching by the pranks of a stage-player, who succeeded so well in his mockery that for once the preacher was silenced, and Harris was requested to mount the platform and try what he could do. Taking for his text the words, "The great day of His wrath is come, and who

* Tyerman's "Whitfield," i., 107.

shall be able to stand?" he was answered by the same buffoon, "I am able." "What"! exclaimed Harris, in a strong voice and looking at him the same moment with a firm countenance and piercing eyes, "What! such a poor contemptible worm as thou art!" The words were no sooner uttered than the merryandrew fell to the ground overcome by a peculiar tremor, from which it is said he never fully recovered.*

Passing on to Basingstoke, the "fire" which Whitfield wanted to catch from Harris's inspiration seemed now to burn within him with a livelier glow, impelling one of the boldest of preachers to still more daring deeds. "As I passed on horseback," Whitfield remarks, "I saw a stage; and as I rode further I met divers (people) coming to the revel, which affected me so much that I had no rest in my spirit; for I could not bear to see so many dear souls, for whom Christ died, ready to perish, and no minister or magistrate interpose." It required, in the opinion of Whitfield, "as much courage and power to divert people from such things as the Apostles had to exert in converting the heathen from dumb idols." He was, however, bent upon entering the lists. "I told my fellow-travellers that I was resolved to follow the example of Howell Harris in Wales, and to bear my testimony against such lying vanities, let the consequences as to my own private person be what they would. They immediately consenting I rode back to town, got upon the stage erected for the wrestlers, and began to show them the error of their ways. I then got off, with unspeakable satisfaction to myself that I had now begun to attack the devil in his strongest holds, and had borne my testimony against the detestable diversions of this generation."†

After parting company for some time Harris, Whitfield, and William Seward arrive in London on the same day, viz.,

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 58.

† "Life of Whitfield," by Phillips, p. 108.

April 25th, 1739.* They found congenial religious fellowship at a Moravian Society which had been formed at the house of James Hutton, near Temple Bar, but was now removed to Neville's Court, Fetter Lane. This Society at Fetter Lane was distinguished by the social position of some of its members, which eventually included Lord and Lady Huntingdon, Sir John Phillips, Sir John Thorold, Messrs. Cennick and Oakley,—as well as by the eminent character of the ministers who used to attend at the Society's gatherings and assist in the services. These latter included Wesley, Whitfield, Ingham, as well as the subject of the present history. The services conducted at this place were remarkable for the manifestations of the Divine presence experienced; frequently whole nights would be spent in prayer, and such was the amazement and awe that many would cry out and fall to the ground as if the Lord were visibly in their midst.

The influence of some of the Moravians—Peter Böhler in particular—on the minds of the Wesleys, in leading them to a fuller understanding of the position and work of faith in the economy of salvation, is well known in the history of those distinguished brothers. In all probability it was from the celebrated James Hutton, one of the same fraternity, that Harris also received the impressions concerning the same grace, to which he now confesses. Referring to his first visit to London, he says: "I received further gospel light by conversing with a friend, who among other observations said to this effect—'I see many people concerned about working in themselves, but few seem to be convinced of the necessity of believing in Christ before they can do anything acceptable in his sight.' There came such a fresh light with these words to my heart that I could not but insist that faith is the fundamental grace in spiritual work, and the genuine spring of all our obedience; and till we receive this grace we cannot apprehend the righteousness of Christ, and consequently

* "Life of Whitfield," by Tyerman, i., 104.

cannot say that we are justified. This fresh light brought with it also fresh convictions, which sunk deeper and deeper into my spirit, especially by reading part of *Cotton on the Covenant of Grace*, whilst he was showing how far one might go with right notions of salvation, and yet not rightly believe, trust, or rely confidently on the merits of Christ, but in somewhat done by us or in us. And when he showed the many false rests people are apt to acquiesce in short of Christ, namely, how some rest in their outward profession of true religion; others because they are orthodox in their principles; and others because they have reformed their lives, and do abound in all good works; and while he showed all these were our works and not the Blood of Christ, and that a person building his hope here was not building on Christ (although I had been brought from all these rests a long time before by reading *The Sincere Convert*), I was wounded by close re-examination; especially as he went on to show that we may trust in our faith, good frames, and performances (though they were good in their places, yet to rely on them is idolatry) and not in Christ's blood only. And though I had the seed sown in my soul four years before, and had daily feelings of God's love in my heart, yet the awakenings that I felt this time made so deep an impression on my heart that I could hardly bear them,—yea I can say that my spirit was greatly distressed with deep anguish of soul for some days together, until I was refreshed by that text in Rev. xxii. 17, 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' This sustained me, and I felt I was willing to let God do what he pleased with me. But yet still I was humbled with some reasonings about going directly to Christ in every condition; till at one time a woman came to me to relate how all the night she had been in distress and perplexity, reasoning with the enemy whether she was a child of God or not, and that she could have no rest or satisfaction till it came to her mind to go to Christ as she was; and that she had thereupon peace and

victory. Upon hearing this, and some preaching afterward that people should come to Christ as they are without reasoning in themselves, I was made to cease from reasoning, and to go with all my complaints and fears, and lay them before the Friend of Sinners, who loved me freely and not for any good in me. Now that legal principle of fitting myself for Christ, and of being afraid to go to Him when I was not in a good frame, was rooted out of my heart; then I learned to look and go directly to Christ at all times, and in all circumstances."

During Mr. Harris's stay in London he had much of Mr. Whitfield's company, and had the good fortune to ingratiate himself more deeply into his good opinion. The subject of employing laymen to assist in the great work was now engaging the attention of the two great leaders in the English revival. At a Moravian meeting in Fetter Lane, May 16th, Whitfield declared against lay-preaching;* but subsequently he seems to have become more moderate. Writing to Mr. Wesley from London, June 25, 1739, Whitfield remarks, "I suspend my judgment of brother Watkins' and Cennick's behaviour till I am better acquainted with the circumstances of their proceeding. I think there is a great difference between them and Howell Harris. He has offered himself thrice for Holy Orders; him therefore and our friends at Cambridge I shall encourage."†

Previous to leaving the Principality, Mr. Harris had made ample arrangements for the oversight of the societies he had formed. In addition to the assistance of the more competent from the members, he found willing coadjutors in several dissenting ministers, some of whom now sent him their reports. He was informed of how things went on in the counties of Montgomery and Merioneth by Mr. Lewis Rees. Glamorganshire was reported by Mr. David Williams and

* Tyerman's "Whitfield," i. p. 216.

† Tyerman's "Wesley," i. 277.

Mr. Henry Davies; the border parts between Breconshire and Herefordshire by Mr. James Roberts; and the portion of Breconshire of which Trevecca was the centre by Mr. Edmund Jones. Mr. James Roberts, who dates his letter April 17th, 1739, and directs it to Mr. Harris, at Mr. Seward's, Badsey, near Evesham, Worcestershire, is rather facetious in his remarks. After addressing him as "Dear Howell," he says, "Let me be a moment or two a little cheerful with you. You are a sort of Superintendent or Lord Archbishop in several counties; it is proper, therefore, your poor chaplain, who has obeyed your commands, and written the letter of which a copy is herewith sent you, should inform you of his discharge of duty, that if any part is liable to censure you may write yourself and guard against it." The letter alluded to was a pastoral which Roberts had sent to the Societies assembling near Longtown, Llandefathen, Crickadarn, and Gwendwr. Mr. Edmund Jones communicates himself as follows.

"May 21, 1739.

"Dear Sir,—I have been about your Societies as a watch, to see both how they did, and whether the devil was attempting to mischief them or no; and I can say, blessed be God, I found all well, and your mother and aunt were well. I have been in a society at your mother's house, and met with God's presence towards the latter end of the opportunity. I hope I made this journey according to the will of God, as well as at your request; for I have not had so much of God's presence in any journey I made these seven years. But especially was it well with me at Maesyronen, at the last prayer at Gwendwr, the Lord's day at Tredustan, and Monday at Grwynefychan, from noon till sleeping time, especially in the society, to talk of Jacob's ladder. Your friends in Breconshire begin to long for you, and do very affectionately long for you. But I should give you a more particular account of God's goodness at Tredustan; there was a large auditory, and while they were giving the psalm in Dr. Watts's, Psalm 84, the first

part, my soul began to warm and kindle ; and a sweet weeping ensued. I laid my head on the pulpit, choosing while so that they would not see me. I had not gone far in the sermon, but the presence of God stirred my soul to speak vehemently to the people, and they were affected. While they were singing the last psalm God put it strongly into my heart to pour mightily my soul for you to God, in prayer for you before them all, and was even in haste to pray for you, and did so. I saw and felt that God loved and would honour you before that large assembly. They were much affected, especially Mrs. Thomas, of Gwernddyfrog, who expressed to me her great longing to see you again. I had strength from God to pray for you at Grwynefychan society, and I heard one ready to cry out once at it. I believe that God's blessing will crowd upon you. But as these words were given out and sung—

‘ My soul warm'd with His rich gifts,

The Heavenly Dove descends and fills the place,'—

my soul took fire, and I believe it was a prophecy of what would ensue, as it came to pass.

“ The warrant against you is come to nothing. Counsellor Gwynne would not meddle with it, nor any of the Justices except the clergy Justices, and Price Davies especially was observed to be your adversary ; but they were discouraged and seemed to be ashamed of it. Parson James, of Llan-amwch, who was so active against you, narrowly escaped drowning some time ago, which deserves notice. I desired the young people of the societies to pray especially for those gentlemen who stood for you. The books came to your mother's house.

“ I rest cordially yours in the Lord,

“ EDMUND JONES.”

“ P.S.—I sent a letter a-piece for you, Mr. Whitfield, and Mr. Seward, which I hope you have received from Mr. Hutton, bookseller, since you went to London.

“One Hannah Parry, of Llanfron, hath proposed to join at Tredustan; giving the reason for it to Mr. Williams and me that she could not at all have God’s presence in the Church, and had it in the meeting even at Maesyronen, especially in hearing them at the sacrament. I advised her to stay until we should know your mind in the case, but she was not inclined to stay.

“Yours, E. JONES.”

“For Mr. Howell Harris, in the Rev. Mr. Whitfield’s company, to be left with Mr. James Hutton, bookseller, near Temple Bar, London.”

CHAPTER IX.

MONMOUTH ASSIZES.

AFTER parting with his many dear friends in London, Mr. Harris returns to Trevecca. He rests for a night at his home, that is, if the snatches of sleep he allowed himself can be properly designated by such a term, and then once more he plunges into the heat of the contest to do battle against the sins of his country.

“The next day,” he says, “I was called by business to Abergavenny, and was edified in reading Bunyan’s *Law and Grace* by the way. Then my soul was much revived at the kind and hearty reception I had from some of my dear friends there. I could not part with them till after nine at night; then I went, and came home about one in the morning, notwithstanding I had travelled these eight days past very hard, and had many letters to write, and also was to discourse with some of my neighbouring friends before noon. I was assisted to sit up all night to read, write, and pray; yet the Lord enabled me to discourse with great strength of body at noon, and again in the evening with much power, near the Hay, for about two hours. From thence I set off about five miles further, and to bed about twelve.

“The following day as I was going to Longtown, in Herefordshire, many young people were crowding towards a feast kept there. I had a spirit of pity and tenderness to them, and from that spirit spoke home to persuade them from going. Because I had some concern in my soul that God was so publicly dishonoured, and that souls are in such a miserable

condition, I had some drawings in my mind to go to the feast, and I was made willing to suffer whatever I should meet; and after having prayed alone ventured to go thither in the name of God. Before I came to the great crowd I came to a few who were together at their diversion; to these I took occasion to speak on account of one of them swearing, and while I was speaking with these the news went to the great crowd that I was there, and they ran up by hundreds, till I believe there was in a little time about two thousand around me; and the Lord gave me courage to attack the devil in his own quarters, and made my face as a flint, supplying me with proper matters. And especially when I saw some gentlemen and ladies coming up I was made stronger and stronger to humble their pride. I was also moved to apply home to the minister of the parish, and two justices that were present, asking how they could give account of their stewardship while they countenanced pride, swearing, and drunkenness. Some of the gentlemen laughed at me, and one cried, 'Take the babbler down!' but my time was not yet come. I went from thence towards Abergavenny; there the vilest of the town came to hear me, and the Lord helped me to deliver my message faithfully and boldly at Mr. J——'s. Mr. E. Jones was present. We went to bed about two o'clock in the morning.

"Having now by the strength of the Lord a power and courage to resist the devil in two towns I went on my way to the third, namely, Pontypool; and there, after I had been led to discourse much about the courage of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and how the Lord stands by His people in the day of battle, I was at last honoured with the fulfilment thereof in myself, for Mr. C. H. came upon us, and read the Riot Act, ordering us to separate in an hour's time. At his first coming our spirits were a little discouraged, but immediately the Lord strengthened me to tell him that in obedience to his majesty's order we would separate. He then ordered a constable to take care of me; I had full courage in

the inward man to say that I was willing to go to prison and to death to save souls, but that we had here no riot nor sedition against church or state. I asked him if he read that Act at cock-matches, &c., but he continued his threatenings that he would take notice of as many as he could, and if they did not disperse as before they should die without benefit of clergy. The assembly continued unmoved and easy. I told him we would part, having first prayed for him that the curse of those people might not fall on his head, and that God would not lay this to his charge in the day of judgment,—‘where,’ I told him, ‘you shall stand not as a justice of the peace, but as a responsible creature to give an account how you did bear the sword of justice.’ He then replied that ‘that did not trouble him at present.’ Then we went to prayer, and when I begged God would meet him, as He did Saul, with His saving grace, he went away, and the people, most of them in tears; and so we parted in great love.

“I was supported, and more cheerful than usual all the time. Late in the evening I went with the constable, and a great number of people before him, and having consulted with some friends (though it was my own inclination to go to prison), I gave two bails to answer at the next great Session at Monmouth. Then I said further that I was surprised that Major H—’s son (for he was a goodnatured man) should be the first persecutor of a protestant peaceable assembly. He said he had his orders from above. I asked him, ‘Was it from heaven?’ And he said, ‘No, I did not mean that.’ I told him that I thought if his majesty knew how loyal and harmless we were that he would not love him the better for suppressing us. Thus I parted with him, having left some arrows in his conscience about his being soon to give an account of himself at a dreadful tribunal, but that I had and would pray for him; and he thanked me.

“This being about the middle of June, I was not to appear at the great session in Monmouth till August. In the

meantime I was determined to be diligent in the work of my Lord. I went from hence to Bristol, where I had a sweet conversation with my friends there; then I went to a society of Welshmen,* where I expounded for near two hours. Thence to hear Mr. John Wesley, whom I had heard much talk of and loved much from what I had heard of him, but had some prejudice against him because he did not hold the Perseverance of the Saints, and the doctrine of Election. He preached on Isaiah xlv. 22,—‘Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.’ And so excellently and clearly held forth free justification by faith without the works of the law, and the necessity, duty, and privilege of every one’s looking to Jesus for righteousness, strength, and all instead of reasoning, and so on; and the Spirit of God attended his discourse to my soul in such a manner that much of the Lord’s glory broke in upon my soul, and my prejudice against him fell away, and I was convinced that he was a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, especially when I went to him at Mrs. G—’s, where he was vastly enlarged in prayer for me, for the Rev. G. Jones, and all Wales. Thus I believe from the benefit I received that my going to Bristol was from God.”

With regard to the doctrines of Election and Final Perseverance, which Harris touches upon in the foregoing extract, it is stated by Morgan,† on the authority of the Rev. D. Griffiths, Rector of Nevern, that at the beginning of their acquaintance Howell Harris was somewhat influenced by Mr. Wesley on these particular points; but that “having attended the ministry of Mr. Griffith Jones he was greatly impressed with the grand truths forcibly and practically set forth by him, and was much excited and wrought upon, insomuch that he wept and trembled under Jones’s preaching; his views also were sweetly and experimentally restored, and the doctrines of grace were the food of his soul.”

* Probably founded by Harris on a previous visit. † Life of Harris, p. 84.

Mr. Harris himself confesses that this first meeting with Mr. Wesley removed his prejudice ; and the latter was under the impression that he had made a convert to his own views.* At any rate a life-long friendship was begun, and the opinions of Harris preserved from the extreme and repelling forms of hyper-Calvinism.

Bidding farewell to all his friends at Bristol, Mr. Harris sets out again for Wales ; and “ the door now opens wider and wider to the several counties of Glamorgan, Brecon, Carmarthen, and part of Radnor, Cardigan, and Pembroke-shire.” It would be gratifying to come across particulars of the long journey he now made, and to learn something of the perils endured, the comforts enjoyed, the souls converted, and the new societies planted ; but the whole is dismissed with the general statement that he “ had reason to believe that his labours were attended with much blessing.”

The whole of this journey was timed so as to bring him home to Trevecca by the 7th of August ; and as the Monmouth Assizes at which he had given his pledge to appear was now approaching, he started off again the same evening to be ready for his trial. Passing through Abergavenny he called at the house of a Mr. J—, and there met with christian friends who were prepared to go with him and bear a part in his sufferings should occasion require. After spending the night “ most agreeably ” in company with those friends, he proceeded to Monmouth, having heard in the meantime that his persecutors were resolved to have him punished to the utmost rigour of the law, whatever it might cost. “ I knew,” he writes, “ that I had neither friends nor money to make any defence or to help me that way ; for I had renounced all my former friends, and if I was deluded as they said, and not sent of God, I knew that He would not stand by me. But, however, this being my case, it drove me to send strong cries to the Lord that He would give me a clearer proof of my com-

* Trevecca MS.

mission, and whether I suffered for His cause or for my own imprudence and indeliberateness, as some said I did. But the Lord comforted me soon by that portion of scripture, Esther vi. 9, 'thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.' Yet then it appeared to me as a wrong step to honour to be obliged to stand at the bar, to bear the contempt of the court and the whole county, not considering that the cross is the way to the crown, and that the reproach of Christ is the greatest honour. When I came to Monmouth, the Lord, though without my knowledge, had animated many friends and brought them from several parts, as London, Gloucester, and Wales, to stand by me; but the magistrates after consulting about the affair thought it not expedient to appear against me; and so I was dismissed." Amongst the many friends who sent up their intercessions on his behalf at this important juncture was Mr. Henry Davies, of Blaengwrach; and amongst those who accompanied him to the assize was a well-known Baptist minister of the day, Mr. Miles Harry, of Pontypool.

The elation of success is often as fatal to a thorough reliance upon the support of the Almighty as the disappointment of failure; and a counter-balancing influence has frequently to be administered as a check to the tendencies of undue exultation. After Mr. Harris had parted with some of his friends at Monmouth he went forward with others to Llanfihangel-Cerrig-Cornel, and there volunteered to speak in the name of his Lord and Master. The treatment he received was so full of contradiction, ridicule, and abuse that he felt inwardly humbled, and had to infuse into his manner a greater amount of meekness and affection before his audience could be subdued, and an open door obtained to discourse and pray. "Surely," he adds, "times of trial are very sweet seasons; they draw forth our faith into exercise, and knit our hearts more closely to God and His people."

But the general effect of his success at Monmouth was

one of calm assurance. The trial had assumed in Harris's mind the character of a test as to whether his humanly unauthorized method of procedure was agreeable or contrary to the will of heaven ; and now that the accusations against him had ignominiously collapsed, he experienced a measure of mental peace that no future opposition could disturb. "After my dismissal," he writes, "I was more established in my own soul that my mission was from God ; especially as I had so often applied for Holy Orders, and was rejected for no other reason but for my preaching as a layman. I felt no scruple ever since, but have been more and more established and confirmed both from Scripture examples, and by the judgment and practice of the Church, and former eminent divines. As to the lawfulness of laymen's preaching in some cases and at times of necessity, I saw in the Acts of the Apostles the account of Apollos, and others who were scattered by the death of Stephen, having no other mission than being moved by the Holy Ghost, and love to the immortal souls of their fellow-creatures. I thought a greater time of necessity could hardly be than at present, when the whole country, in a cursory sense, lay in a luke-warm, dead condition. In many churches for some months together there was no sermon ; and in other places an English learned discourse to a Welsh illiterate congregation ; and where an intelligible sermon was preached it was so legal, in the language of the old covenant, and advancing man's works instead of treating of a Mediator, that should any give heed to it they could easily perceive that they were far from being led thereby to Christ, the only new and living way to God. Seeing this, and feeling the love of Christ in my heart, I saw an absolute necessity of going about to propagate the Gospel of my dear Master and Redeemer."

The successful termination of the trial was a source of almost equal joy to Mr. Harris's friends, and to Mr. Whitfield in particular. Writing to an acquaintance, on his way to

America, he says, "I thank God for his goodness to brother Harris; and I thank you for informing me of it." And again after landing he writes to Harris himself from Philadelphia: "I congratulate you on your success at Monmouth. By divine permission I hope in about a twelve-month to make a second use of your field pulpits. Our principles agree as face answers to face in water. Since I saw you God has been pleased to enlighten me more in that comfortable doctrine of election. The people of Wales are much upon my heart. I long to hear how the Gospel flourishes among you. How prospers your inward man? Being always doing, no doubt you grow in grace. May you increase with all the increase of God." Again in another letter from Boston Mr. Whitfield asks,—“And is dear brother H. Harris yet alive in body and soul? I rejoice in your success. May you mount with wings like eagles. You shall not be taken nor hurt till the appointed time.”

It is to be observed that both Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Harris frequently express themselves, in their correspondence, as being secure in the discharge of their duty till their "time" was come. When, however, persecution or suffering did present itself, Mr. Harris in particular faced and endured it, and then pursued his mission undeterred by its consequences, with a fearless courage peculiar to himself. In this very neighbourhood in which the last few pages have traced him, he had his full share of personal abuse. On one occasion he preached by a bridge that spanned the Usk near the picturesque little town of Crickhowell. As he discoursed a gentleman known as Councillor Davies, of Court-y-collen, came forward and ordered him to be silent on pain of being plunged into the river by a number of men who were ready to do his bidding. Undismayed by the danger Mr. Harris proceeded with his discourse, and as the truths fell upon the gentleman's ears, enforced by matchless fervour and powerful oratory, his prejudice died away; he remained a patient hearer to the

end, and at the close went forward to accost the preacher with a friendly shake of the hand. But Mr. Harris had more diabolical persecutors than the Councillor threatened to be. One night, about two o'clock in the morning, Mr. Walter Rumsey, a respectable farmer who lived at Tor-y-gaer, on the slope of the Black Mountains in the same vicinity, and one of Harris's converts, was disturbed by a feeble knock at the door, and a faint cry for admittance. The voice was recognised as that of the Trevecca reformer, and when the door was opened the sight was pitiable. His clothes were torn, his face covered with blood, his head cut in thirteen different parts, and his body bruised. The hospitable roof of Mr. and Mrs. Rumsey sheltered him till he was sufficiently recovered, and then he went on his way to resume his work.

Proceeding in the strength of what the success at the Monmouth assizes led Harris to believe was a renewed commission from the Lord, he made a second excursion this year through the counties of South Wales. Referring to his journey in a letter to a friend, Nov. 30th, 1739, he says, "I hope the Lord sent me to the places I visited since I left you; therefore beg for a heart to bless the glorious Jehovah, in Christ, on my behalf. I hope the Lord owned me at St. Andrew's and St. Nicholas, to put a stop to Arminian errors effectually. Yesterday I discoursed in Cowbridge Market-house, and was a little interrupted. After I had done discoursing I had private conversation with five leading men of the town, and I hope it was to purpose, and that the Lord will send me there again."

It may be remarked concerning the early labours of Harris in Glamorganshire, that until the appearance of assistants in the character of exhorters, who arose from amongst his own converts, his labours were almost altogether unaided. But he was equal to any demand upon his strength or courage, and bore himself with an intrepidity that was a terror to ungodliness wherever he appeared. His spirit was like a

bow in its full strength ; he scattered his missiles fast and far ; and his voice rang out clear and strong, exercising when lifted up to its loudest tones a species of fascination that attracted the crowds and subdued them to his authority.

His converts during these journeys could be numbered by the score, and nearly all the early societies of Glamorganshire were of his planting ; and such was the contrast between the renewed lives of the members and their previous irregularity, that in the report of one of those societies, namely, that at Llantrissant, written not long after the period now treated of, there is an expression of praise because that “swearers, and drunkards, and persecutors, had tasted the good word of God, and were now hungering and thirsting for the Lord Jesus ; and even prejudiced old sinners were constrained to acknowledge the finger of God in the movement, were truly broken for their sins, and sought an interest in the blood of Christ.”*

Amongst those brought down about this period by the shafts of the Reformer was one William Thomas, a lad sixteen years of age, from the parish of Margam. This youthful convert, after remaining four years in the pangs of conviction, found peace in Christ, and eventually preached in His name. When he became a successful farmer at Ty-mawr, near Pyle, he drew upon himself and his excellent wife who joined him in his charity the blessing of many who were ready to perish, and gave with such a liberal hand that some were wont to express their surprise that the abundance of Ty-mawr could hold out so long. This good man, who became a power for good in the Vale of Glamorgan, acquired such fame for his piety that his farmyard would frequently be filled with hearers at the time he conducted the family worship ; and when at last he passed away in the year 1811, he breathed out his soul in the words, “There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” He had many opportunities during his life-

* “Methodistiaeth Cymru,” iii. p. 5.

time of hearing Howell Harris, and he retained for his memory such unbounded veneration that in his infirmity he would revive at the mention of his name, and exclaim with a swinging motion of the body, "I feel the authority of his voice in my bones at this very moment."

Some distance to the north from Pyle, and surrounded by high and barren hills, is the parish of Llangynwyd. To this place also, sometime in the early part of his career, Mr. Harris paid a visit. The clergyman of this neighbourhood, the Rev. Mr. Thomas, was of an easy disposition, and cared not who invaded his domain so long as his own enjoyment was not interfered with. His wife was of a different temperament, and assumed the custody of the clerical character. When she heard that an unordained stranger had preached from a heap of stones called "The Mount," just outside the churchyard walls, she forthwith gave orders that every stone should be scattered, that no trace might remain of the impious desecration.

The labours and success of Harris were no less marked in the western parts of Glamorganshire. He had here equal difficulties to encounter, and equal dangers to undergo. In the parish of Llansamlet, near Swansea, where the first-fruits of the great revival were gathered, ungodliness was rampant to an extent unsurpassed in any portion of the county; and the Sunday games that flourished had rooted themselves deeply in the habits and affections of the people. The principal place of meeting was a certain cock-pit in the midst of a wood, where every Sunday the diversion of the following Sabbath was duly announced; and when the game birds had exhausted their puny strength in plunging at each other, a free and sanguinary scuffle would ensue amongst the spectators. The general disorder would sometimes be increased by a certain rivalry between the parishioners of Llansamlet and their neighbours of Llangyfelach, and a kind of parish feud was transmitted from father to son.

The morals of this locality were futher blasted by an institution that was known as *Cwrw-bach*, a name for the practice of meeting together in large numbers for the purpose of illicitly selling and drinking intoxicants. This was sometimes done with no motive whatever but that of bestial enjoyment, and sometimes under cover of devoting the profits to a friendly or charitable purpose.

When Howell Harris first came to the place he preached at a farm-house called Wern-llestr, the residence of Hopkin Davies. This Davies yielded himself to the power of the truth at a subsequent meeting, and acquired a good name for his gifts and character. At one of the services in this place, a woman persisted in a demonstrative dandling of her baby to the distraction of the audience, but was restored to decorum by the stern command of Harris that she should "worship God."

One of the triumphs of Harris in scattering the forces of wickedness in the western parts of Glamorganshire took place at Crug-glas, in the vicinity of Swansea. The leader of all mischief in the locality was a certain Roger Rogers, familiarly known as "Rotch of Gadle." This man was a veritable champion of darkness, excelled in skill as he did in zeal, and was already marshalling his comrades for the sin of the day when Harris came upon the scene. His appearance was the signal for a general stir, and the turmoil that took place was such that, according to the historian of Welsh Methodism, the heart of anyone but of Harris would have failed him on the spot. To him the fighting and the brawling and the mockery served only as an impetus, and when he stood up to pray the gravity of his countenance, the penetration of his voice, and the earnestness of his intercession, produced an electrical effect; the tumult began to give way; the devotees of sin could not endure the words that were spoken; while some of them were covered with shame and alarm, and dispersed as if chased by an evil spirit. The harper also finding

himself without an audience took to his heels, and left Roger, as all commanders ought to be left, the last man to quit the field. The iniquitous games were effectually crushed by this attack, but Rotch was not converted, for he only withdrew to drown his vexation at a neighbouring public house. But his apprehension came at last. He was out early one Sunday scouring the country for dogs to hunt on the following day, when suddenly he was arrested by the truth. He returned without the hounds, threw himself upon his bed, and literally writhed with the anguish of his mind. He was led to the knowledge of Christ by the Rev. Lewis Rees, who had by this time settled as pastor of the Independent Church at Mynydd-bach; and after being a member at this place for a time, he ended his days in communion with his Methodist friends at Llansamlet, having spent the remainder of his life a leader of good works as he had formerly been in sin.

Mr. Harris was another time in Swansea, and preached near the same spot. A drunken fellow at the instigation of opponents came forward to shoot him, but failed to fire. Harris ordered him to point in another direction and the charge would go off. The result was as predicted, but the assassin refused to reform, and was found dead near a lime-kiln. 5

The same scenes of godlessness characterized the whole of that district. A few miles to the north-west of Swansea is the neighbourhood of Corseinion. Harris disturbed a revel in this place, and amongst those converted was Hopkin John Hopkins, a stone-mason. This Hopkins afterwards opened his house to receive the preaching of the gospel, and when societies were multiplied in the neighbourhood five of them used to hold united meetings monthly at his house. A few miles further on in the same direction, and in the western extremity of the county, is the parish of Llandilo-tal-y-bont. A certain John Morgan was proceeding as a thoughtless youth to Waungron in this parish to take part in the amuse-

ments of the day, and was within a quarter of a mile of the place, when over the heads of the people he heard the clear shout of Harris, who had already come to the attack, and was in the full thunder of his discourse. "His voice had such authority," Morgan used to say, "that it went through my bones like a shock." In the same parish and on a similar mission he preached on another occasion, and narrowly escaped the summary revenge of the crowd for interfering with their pleasure, by the prompt intervention of a few friends who came to his rescue and snatched him from their power.

A third time we have to record a visit of Harris to this particular locality of Waungron, for it was a spot famous as the rendezvous of every graceless character on Sundays and holy-days. When Harris stood up to preach his ministry produced unwonted dismay; the harper's arms and fingers became nerveless, and the instrument fell from his hands, at the same time that he and others set up a shriek as if they had been wounded in battle. Some of those in the assembly were men of substance, and foamed with madness at the interruption of their pleasure, and with horrible oaths swore they would murder the preacher. Pentre Pasgedgwyn, the residence of one of them, being at hand, he fetched a loaded gun, and pointing it at Harris endeavoured more than once to fire. Undismayed by his peril, the preacher called out to the murderer that if he pointed his muzzle another way he would be more successful, and then exclaimed, "The God I serve is able to deliver me." The result of this endeavour was that several were converted and served the living God.

Continuing his letter of November 30th, 1739, Mr. Harris writes: "I am now on my way to Pembrokeshire. I lost my way on the hills last night, but the Lord remembered His covenant. O, beg for clearer evidences, strong sealings, more cordial witnesses of the Spirit of God. Continue pleading that you may be more like Him, that you may more surely

say He is yours, so that if a drawn sword should be presented to your heart it might not surprise you in the least, because that you had been assured on solid and right ground."

Mr. Harris possessed in his own mind the assurance he sought to instil into others, and was animated with a courage that the sight of no weapon could cause him alarm. Being on a certain Easter Monday at Llangendeyrn, in Carmarthenshire, in the midst of a large crowd, some of whom had been drawn to the place by the announcement that he was to preach, and the majority by their intention of spending the day in the usual manner of cock-fighting and revelry, a Mr. Gwyn, of Wempa, dashed forward on horseback with a sword dangling at his side, and evidently intending to injure or frighten the preacher; perceiving his purpose Mr. Harris in the coolest manner asked the people to make way, but was saved the trouble of an altercation by the sudden rearing of the steed, to the palpable danger of the rider and the ultimate quietness of Mr. Harris's meeting.

At Llandilo, in the same county, he preached near the spot where the George Hotel was afterwards erected. In connection with this meeting we have another story of his being unsuccessfully fired at, with the same authoritative command that the weapon should be tried another way, the only variation being that Harris asked the people to remark that his would-be assassin would not die on his bed: a prediction that was afterwards fulfilled by the sudden expiration of the man while at a game of ball in the churchyard. The coincidence between this and other events in his life has led the historian of Welsh Methodism to observe, that he had obtained the information from a source that would be deemed reliable in every other connection.

One of those reclaimed at Llandilo by Harris's preaching was Morgan Nathan, a game-keeper near the town. Nathan's employer, Colonel Rice, of Dynevor Castle, was partial to the revival, and held his game-keeper in great esteem. When a

tale-bearer, thinking to obtain favour, informed Mr. Rice that Nathan had on one occasion taken a horse from the stables to carry him to a distant meeting, he was met with a stern rebuff, and was ordered to saddle the horse himself whenever Nathan had need of him for a similar purpose.

Passing on to Pembrokeshire, Harris made his first visit to St. David's. This town has always been comparatively inaccessible on account of the roughness of the roads by which it is approached ; and even at the present day of convenient travelling is sixteen miles from the nearest railway station, and being the centre of no particular industry is allowed to sleep on the westernmost cliffs of the country in isolation and neglect. Its insulated position has been no disadvantage in educational and religious facilities, inasmuch as the place has been from time immemorial the seat of a majestic cathedral, whose imposing services have been sustained by a staff of resident or visiting clergy of every rank and degree. The moral and religious condition of the people, notwithstanding these advantages, was in no particular more advanced than the remainder of the county at that time, for the people sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, and were so indifferent to the seriousness of their position that, like the inhabitants of Laish, they sat "quiet and secure." A few of the people, it is true, attended the Established Church on Sabbath mornings ; but the dronings of the slumbering clergy were but little calculated to awaken the mass of the people, who "flocked together into houses where music, dancing, and all manner of amusements imaginable were going on ; while in summer they had select places in the fields to meet together on the Sabbaths, where all ranks and ages carried on their sports ; dreaming that none on earth were more happy than they, when suddenly, in the midst of their thoughtless and godless mood, appeared Howell Harris, and caused the information to be spread that at a certain time and place he would preach to the people."

When the Rev. Daniel Rowlands first visited the city he was permitted to discourse in the cathedral, and marvellous were the effects that attended his ministrations. It would have been gratifying to Harris also, with his passionate regard for the church of his childhood, to exercise his powers within the same hoary precincts ; but his providential exclusion from Holy Orders compelled him to speak to the people, in such places only as the characters he was anxious to save could be reached. Standing on the steps of the stone-cross, in the central square of the town, he was surrounded by a multitude of people, who had been drawn by the spirit of curiosity, or enquiry, or opposition, and every bad or indifferent motion by which a crowd may be gathered,—“and then without delay the preacher proceeded to deliver his message, exposing the sins in which the town and country lay and were guilty of, every particle of his speech flashing and gleaming so vividly on the consciences of the hearers that they became terrified, and feared that the day of judgment had already come. Yea, so powerful were the effects accompanying his words that bold and hardy men were seized with faintings through fear and terror, and fell like corpses at the feet of the preacher. Mr. Harris on this occasion completely put an end to the sinful and ungodly practice of plays and sports, which were usually carried on during the Sabbath, so that nothing of the kind was any more to be seen in this part of the country.

“ It is said that Mr. Harris would not generally take any text out of the Bible when preaching ; and when he took one, he would not mention the place whence it was taken. Another thing stated by the old people is, that Harris at his first visit did not in delivering his message give so much as the slightest hint of any means or dispensation existing, whereby a sinner might be spared or saved, but proclaimed in undisguised and positive terms the certain and unavoidable destruction of such. But when he came the second time to the country, he brought the healing balm with him in its full

extent, and in due adaption to the dimensions of the wound.

“The effects which followed the first visit were very impressive ; many were convinced and ‘pricked in their hearts,’ and their minds, as it might be thought, were in an awful state of distress, considering that there was nothing in the contents of the ministry but law and condemnation, without a ray of hope appearing from any quarter. An idea of the mental gloom these men experienced may be had from one example.

“There was a man named John Griffiths living at this time at St. David’s, in whose house preaching was held after this for many years. He had several children. One of them named Thomas, a lad of about fifteen years, went, as many others, to hear the stranger, thoughtless enough, and having not the slightest idea of any effect likely to result from this step. However, he had not heard much before he felt conviction and ‘pricking at the heart’ reaching him from every word uttered by the preacher. A terrible storm soon assailed his mind ; his fear and alarm rather increased day and night. In process of time a suggestion arose in his mind that it would be better to put an end to his life, inasmuch as he could not but increase his sins and consequently his future punishment and torments by living any longer. With this impression he determined on casting himself headlong from a rock into the sea. Is not this the state described of the ‘life drawing near to the destroyer’? and was there no need of a messenger, an interpreter, one of a thousand, to say unto him, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ’? But in all probability such were not easily found at that time. Therefore he began his sad journey, and while he was hastening with all speed towards the precipice, behold, before he reached the point, the words ‘Son, thy sins which are many are forgiven,’ came to him with such force that he fell to the earth as a corpse, striving to argue that such a saying could not be intended for him ; yet notwithstanding his opposition the word was invincible,

offering the mercy to him personally. When he arose, he saw as if he had opened his eyes upon a new world. Every object appeared different. Peace and tranquility had filled his soul. He lived to the age of eighty years, but never questioned this revelation. Very many both in town and country were similarly impressed under Harris.

“Many of those who were converted came presently to know each other, and to resort to each other’s company in private places, where they could have an opportunity of communicating their thoughts to each other. It is very likely that Harris was the chief in forming this society. There was little or no sustenance for flesh and pride, honour and exaltation, to be had in connection with religion at that time; no one would attempt joining those poor serious persons but such as were themselves under deep conviction respecting their spiritual state. It was a saying of many of the old people that a religious man would be known at that time wherever he appeared, in a court or in a crowd, in a fair or market.

“Mr. Harris was several times at St. David’s afterwards, but was not annoyed more than once. He had mounted the cross, and the congregation had assembled, when a wretch came forward having a most haggard appearance, to disturb the audience. But very unexpectedly one of a rough character struck him to the ground nearly dead. Mr. Harris had so much influence over his hearers in this town that many of the most ungodly would defend him even with their very lives. After allaying this tumult he proceeded with his discourse in a very impressive manner.”*

The society thus formed at St. David’s in the early years of Mr. Harris’s ministry, after sojourning in dwelling houses and hay-lofts for the space of forty-five years before erecting a place of worship, and after seventy years of semi-connection with the Church of the Establishment, during which period they would

* Translated by Morgan in *Life of Harris*, pp. 24–27, from Welsh tract by Rees, Trepuet.

receive the sacrament at the hand of none but those who had been episcopally ordained, is at present, after the lapse of a century and a half from its founding, composed of a congregation that for the number and influence of its native worshippers outdoes the attendants at the cathedral, and is accommodated with a chapel that in its architectural features is second only to the venerable pile itself.

The same year and during the same journey Howell Harris visited Fishguard, in the northern part of Pembrokeshire, and preached in the open air from the steps of a dwelling-house in the centre of the town. His ministry was not so alarming, nor the effect so decided as at St. David's; yet some of the hearers were made serious, and gave proofs of the alteration in their character and pursuits, by meeting together on Sunday afternoons at a house known as Pen-y-cnwc, for the purpose of hearing read possibly the only religious book they could lay hands on, which was "The Welshman's Candle," by Vicar Pritchard.

He also visited many other places at this early period in his ministry, as for instance Cilgerran, a small town in the extreme north of Pembrokeshire, where the discourse he delivered was so authoritative and searching that the hearers fell to the ground with fear and trembling, and many discontinued their occupation under the impression that the end of the world was at hand. In subsequent visits he brought a more soothing message, and as at St. David's, applied a balm to the wounds he had formerly made. Sometimes these journeys would be undertaken in company with some other of the early reformers, as at Llechryd, in Cardiganshire, which he visited along with the Rev. Howell Davies, when, as it is tersely put by the historian of Welsh Methodism, the Howell who was ordained was privileged to stand within the churchyard wall, whereas the Howell from Trevecca, who had begun the work of God without the formal sanction of men, while delivering the same truths and aiming at the same exalted

end, had to content himself with addressing the same congregation from an unconsecrated spot a yard or two outside.

For the most part, however, Mr. Harris pursued his journeys alone, and braved by himself the insults and dangers inseparably connected in every age with the action of those who venture to disturb with a violent shock the deep-rooted sins and pleasures of men. The mission of Howell Harris was emphatically a mission of this sort; and it is left on record as an occasion of glory to God, and as an inspiration to future reformers, that there was hardly a nook throughout the whole of his native Principality, diversified as it is with endless mountains and valleys, which he left unvisited in the fulfilment of his task. He went not only to villages and considerable towns, where hundreds and sometimes thousands would flock to hear, but scoured the lonely and inaccessible parts where hardly a handful of people could be gathered from the sparse population. The small chapel of Zoar, in the parish of Llanddewi-brefi, is a monument to his industry. This place of worship is situated amidst scenery of the wildest grandeur, not far from where the counties of Cardigan, Carmarthen, and Brecknock meet, and is surrounded by a population so scattered that hardly a house may be seen within a mile of any other, whereas the nearest village in any direction is ten miles away. Mr. Harris, who used frequently to call in this neighbourhood on his way to and from Cardiganshire, found the people in a most deplorable spiritual condition when first he attempted to address them in the year 1740. Unaccustomed to the seductions of village or town life, and seldom drawn together except to the burial of a neighbour in the churchyard of their parish, their chief characteristic was a depth of ignorance and apathy that left them only a step removed above the sheep they tended. Should any of the latter go astray, their owners had instinct and interest enough to seek their recovery; but the day invariably set apart for the search was the one appointed as the day of worship. On

he morning of the Sabbath the small farmers might be seen issuing from their isolated tenements, and then returning from the mountains later on with the wanderers astride the saddle in front of them. The place Mr. Harris first preached in was a farm-house of the name of Rhiwhalog. The good wife was converted by his preaching, and the husband also so wrought upon that the first opportunity he purchased a Bible. The Methodist society was not formed till the year 1747, when it was incorporated with the general Connexion by Mr. W. Williams, Pant-y-celyn; but such was the fervour of the first awakening that though it was eighty years later before the chapel was built, the society meanwhile meeting in farm-houses, no disorganisation ensued, and the little community amongst the mountains was on one occasion the centre of a revival that was felt far and near.*

Passing over the next two or three months in his life, we find Mr. Harris in March, 1740, labouring with his usual energy in his own county; he travels every day the wonted number of miles, preaches at the various stages, and then at night, when everybody around him is at rest and the voice can no longer be of service, he seeks to re-animate his fellow-workers and the societies in different parts by means of his inspiring letters. On Monday morning the third of the month he journeys to the parish of Llywel, in Breconshire, in order to make an attack upon a revel that was about to be held; but before starting he writes to a friend as follows: "See what great things the Lord has done for us. Shall not every atom within us study to set forth His praise? Shall one moment of time, shall one opportunity of doing or receiving good pass unimproved to the utmost? Shall any faculty of the soul, any of the mercies of life, health, strength, riches, books, lie useless by us, and not be all laid out to the utmost to set forth the praises of this our unchangeable God! Take care of your evidences; watch your heart, beware of

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," ii. 41.

unbelief; grieve not the Spirit; keep a jealous eye upon yourself; embrace all the holy motions of God in your heart; maintain the simple child-like temper; be continually doing or receiving good, and see that your love be burning."

Mr Harris preached with great authority at the merry-making at Llywel; but the emissaries of Satan were there, and sought to interrupt as much as they could with questions, bell-ringing, and other noises; and as he was taking his departure they endeavoured to provoke him by setting up a dance in the churchyard, "which," he writes, "as I was going away I saw, and could not be easy to leave them there, and so went to the middle of them and was made bold and strong, and the Lord's enemies were put to flight." The day following, which was Tuesday, March 4th, was another day of great power. Twice out of the three times he preached his congregation numbered about two thousand. "Many come to me under the old covenant, struggling in the new birth, failing to come to Christ. I hope the Lord is sending me with the Gospel to set some free; many come to tell what God has done for their souls through me." The following two or three days were a repetition of the same work, and then, as he approached Carmarthen, he put up at the abode of Mr. John Harris, a good old dissenting minister, and about the same time was gratified with an invitation to preach at the house of a justice of the peace, near Llangadock.

About nine o'clock on the evening of March 8th, Mr. Harris arrived at Llanddowror, and was in time to join with Mr. Griffith Jones in family devotion; an exercise conducted by the worthy rector in such a manner that Harris felt he had cause to say, "O my leanness! my leanness! How little do I yet know of the Glorious Majesty, and of the hell within me. I want far more assurance that Christ is mine. O when shall I feel him fully and clearly filling every faculty of my soul in his nature, temper, spirit, holiness, wisdom, simplicity, strength, humility, love." Mr. Griffith Jones and his friend,

the young reformer, sat up together that night till after one o'clock, and then parted; but Harris did not retire to rest, as is proved by one of the letters he wrote, which was timed after three o'clock in the morning. He spent two agreeable days at Llanddowror; saw and conversed with Madam Bevan, the lady who by her munificence so materially assisted Mr. Jones in carrying out his educational schemes. He also heard Mr. Jones preach, and preached himself; and so incessantly were the two friends occupied that neither of them had a moment of time to spare.

He went on from Llanddowror to Pembrokeshire, intending again, as he returned in a week or two, to visit Mr. Griffith Jones. From the last named county he wrote to an acquaintance as follows:—

“Pembrokeshire, March 13th, 1739—40.

“Dear Friend,—Have a watchful eye over me. Help me with your warm prayers and seasonable reproofs and admonitions, that I may be enabled to set forth the glory of the Great God, in unfolding the great mysteries of the Gospel, with power and plainness and purity, and with a prudent, watchful, humble, meek, and loving conduct towards all. Many eyes are upon me; and may I have no wisdom but that which flows from the true fountain and shall savour nothing of the earth or of the first Adam. O how sweet it is to be drawn a little out of ourselves, and to feel a little of the life of faith to see the second Adam. O let it ever be the language of your soul,—‘Here is my heart, my life, my soul, my body, memory, passions, affections, riches, all I am and have, at Thy disposal. Do Thou manage me; leave me not to the government of my own will, to be led by my own light, or follow my own wisdom, or choose my own objects; but set Thou a law of love to rule and govern in every faculty of the soul.’ See to have your will subject to God’s will in all things, and to have your practices consonant therewith. This is the beginning of heaven. Yesterday I discoursed in the evening to a very

great auditory; I felt great weakness, and my spirits low at the beginning; but the Lord strengthened me much. I discoursed in Welsh and English, and I hope some felt that the Lord was among us indeed."

The exalted spirit of devotion that breathes in the communications of Harris at this period, combined with his public spirit and fearless charges upon sin, produced an unwonted commotion in the ranks of iniquity; and as the converts came forward in companies to range themselves under new colours they allowed themselves to be influenced, as was natural, not only in the conduct of their lives but also in the choice of their tenets, by the strong personality of him through whose teaching and fervour they had themselves been reclaimed. They submitted to the regulations he chose to impose, and adopted his own theological views.

"In Wales," writes James Hutton to Count Zinzendorf, on March 14th, 1740, "some thousands are stirred up. They are an exceedingly simple and honest people, but they are taught the Calvinistic scheme. However, the young man Howell Harris, who has been the great instrument in this work, is very teachable and humble, and loves the brethren."*

The Moravian society, of which James Hutton was the leading English member, was at this time infatuated with what came to be known as the doctrine of "stillness," namely, a renunciation and discontinuance of all the ordinary means of grace, and a "quiet waiting upon God in silent prayer as the only possible way to attain a living, saving faith."†

In two or three months from the time of Hutton's communication we find Mr. Harris in London again, and joining with Charles Wesley and others in an onset upon that particular heresy. Writing May 14, 1740, Mr. Charles Wesley says, "I found Mr. Hall at Fetter Lane, asking them whether they

* Tyerman's "Wesley," vol. i., p. 299.

† "Oxford Methodism," p. 395.

would try their spirits by the Word, or the Word by their spirits. I enforced the question, which they strove to evade. Rabbi Hutton forbade their answering me. I warned the few remaining brethren to beware of the leaven of *stillness*; showed them the delusion of those who had cast off the ordinances, and confined the faith to *themselves only*; I foretold the dreadful consequences of their enthusiasm; set the case of Gregor before their eyes; besought, entreated, conjured them not to renounce the means, or deny the Lord that bought them; read a letter from one who had been strongly tempted to leave off the Sacrament, but, in receiving, was powerfully convinced that her dissuader was the devil. Hodges, Hall, and Howell Harris confirmed my words."*

The preaching of Harris during this visit to the Metropolis was such that Charles Wesley says he proved himself a "son of thunder and of consolation,"† whereas his manner in the private meetings is referred to in terms yet more eugolistic: "He declared his experience before the society. O what a flame was kindled! No man speaks in my hearing as this man speaketh. What a nursing father God has sent us! He has indeed learned of the Good Shepherd to carry the lambs in his bosom. Such love, such power, such simplicity, was irresistible."‡

* "Oxford Methodism," p. 395.

† Tyerman's "Wesley," vol. i., p. 307.

‡ "Charles Wesley's Journal," under date May 8th, 1740, quoted by Morgan, p. 46.

CHAPTER X.

INTREPIDITY.

AFTER leaving the Metropolis, where his fervour and tenderness had elicited the admiration of Mr. Charles Wesley, Mr. Harris proceeds with the revival work in Glamorganshire, and is assisted by Mr. William Seward. This gentleman was a native of Badsey, a hamlet about two and a half miles from Evesham, and was a man of independent wealth, but of meagre education and slender ability. He was drawn to seek after God and serve Him as early as the year 1728, and found peace with God through faith in Christ after he had joined the English Methodists, which he did ten years later. In 1739 he became Whitfield's travelling companion, and was with him for some time in America. He had a decided preference for the doctrinal views of Whitfield and Harris, and after coming to a rupture with Charles Wesley at Bristol towards the end of September, 1740, he crossed over to Wales and joined Mr. Harris at Cowbridge.*

Pursuing his journey with Mr. Seward as his companion, Howell Harris presses on to Cardiff. From here they travelled comfortably together to Monmouthshire, and preached in several of the towns on their road, beginning at Newport, where they had to encounter the utmost rage and fury of the mob. Both Mr. Harris's coat sleeves were torn, one quite off; his peruke was also taken away, which compelled him to stand uncovered in the rain; but "O sweet

* "Life of Whitfield," by Tyerman, vol. i., pp. 163—7.

bare-headedness," he writes, "under the reproach of Christ." Silence being restored he discoursed on, but the howling burst forth again, and missiles, including apples, dirt, and stones, flew around. He received one blow on his head which caused a rising and a little blood; his friends would have him desist, but the passion for victory had possessed him so that he could not feel free to give over till God was glorified over Satan.

No wonder that Wesley speaks of the inhabitants of the latter place as "the most miserable, ill-behaved people" he had seen in Wales! "They are," he says, "as utterly ignorant of the gospel as any Creek or Cherokee Indian." And then, in reference to the opposition of the powers to the unauthorised ministrations of Harris, he indignantly asks, "Now of what spirit is he of who would rather these poor creatures should perish for lack of knowledge than that they should be saved by the exhortations of Howell Harris, or any itinerant preacher?" *

Continuing with the account of his journey Mr. Harris says, "When we came to Caerleon, everything seemed calm and quiet while brother Seward prayed and discussed sweetly by the market-house; but when I began to discourse after him they began to roar most horribly, pelting us with dung and dirt, throwing eggs, plum-stones, and other hard substances even in our faces, and hallooed so loud as to drown my voice entirely. Brother Seward had a furious blow on his right eye, which caused him much anguish, and as it affected the left he was obliged to be led by the hand blindfold for some days, till at last he became totally blind. When we came to Monmouth we had much the same treatment as we had at Newport and Caerleon. It happened to be the horse-race there, and both high and low were assembled against us. As I began to discourse on a table over against the town hall windows, where the Duke of B——,

* Morgan, p. 45.

Lord N——, with a great number of gentlemen and ladies were at dinner, they ordered a drum to beat by our sides, although the Lord enabled me to bear my testimony against their balls, assemblies, horse-races, whoredom, and drunkenness; but the drum continued to beat, and the mob to pelt us with apples, pears, stones and dirt, and a dead dog. During this storm brother Seward was much afraid of being hurt, yet he endured it with much calmness of spirit, saying, ‘Better endure this than hell.’ Thus all their opposition could not hinder our progress, but in the strength of the Lord we went on from conquering to conquer.”

Passing through Coleford they came to Gloucester, and here a respite from persecution awaited them. They discoursed here to many hundreds, both in public and private. Being at Gloucester on a Sunday, they heard that the Sacrament would be administered at the Church of St. Nicholas. “I went there,” writes Harris, “and had a fresh sense of my poverty and vileness, so that I could cry experimentally and feelingly, ‘O Lord, I am the poorest, the vilest, and the unworthiest here before Thee.’ And when I fell thus at my Saviour’s feet, then I had sweet and close communion with Him, and my soul felt a pity for all the world, longing, O! that all might be born again and brought to the true knowledge of the Saviour of sinners; yea, I felt I deserved hell for not valuing His precious blood the more. O the infinite value of that blood! It is the fruit of God’s eternal love to poor sinners! Here is light, life, and liberty from the guilt and power of sin, and Oh! that I may abide here for ever.”

During the visits of Harris to Gloucestershire his energy, zeal, and learning used to draw amazing multitudes to hear. On one occasion, when he was preaching in the open-air upon Hampton Common, he was the means of conversion to a singular character. His name was John Croom. Tall and gaunt in appearance, satirical in turn of mind, a Quaker by profession, and yet fond of entertainment, he used

to herd with the multitude in doing evil, and had gone to hear Harris for no purpose but that of mockery. But his attention was arrested, his conscience smitten, and he went home another man. After this he became a Methodist, eventually a preacher, and a regular supply in many societies in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Hants. In 1761 he preached to Mr. Whitfield's congregation at the Tabernacle, London. "His first appearance was on the Sabbath morning, in very plain but decent clothes, with his hair undressed and lank. He chose Acts xv. 36, for his introductory address, 'And see how they do.' He secured himself from reproach by an artless acknowledgment that he did not rank with preachers of eminence; but that having obtained mercy of the Lord and having tasted that He is gracious, he did attempt to speak forth His praise, and encourage poor souls to trust in Him. He signified that nothing more should be expected from a poor plain countryman, in his straight hair, than an endeavour to do good to souls, and that he came there in providence to know how they stood with God, and to see what proof there was of His presence and power amongst them. His appearance and sermon had an astonishing effect. The society and serious part of the congregation were enlivened by and delighted with him." After this he would supply for Mr. Whitfield for weeks at a time. As a preacher he committed nothing to paper, being almost unable to write; but even the genteel ones admitted that there was an unaccountable something about the Rev. John Croom that overcame their prejudice, and as men came to know him better they styled him the John Bunyan of the age.*

Mr. Harris returned from Gloucester to Trevecca. Tradition has it that he was with Mr. Seward conducting a service at Hay, within seven miles of his home, when the latter became the victim of a dastardly attack. Howell Harris, like all who are heedless of danger, succeeded in escaping bodily

* "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," ii., 30—36.

harm; but poor Mr. Seward, being of a timid disposition, was not so fortunate. While he was preaching, a villain hurled a stone with such precision that it struck him on the head, and caused his death. Before expiring he begged of his friends not to proceed against his assailant, and then passed away, to inherit the martyr's crown, at the early age of thirty-eight.* His mortal remains were interred in Cusop churchyard, not far from the spot where he was killed.

The contrary winds of opposition and persecution were now beating furiously, and Harris had to face disturbance almost everywhere. The lovers of wickedness could not brook to be interfered with, but Harris knew nothing of timidity. He had set himself a task to perform; and knowing in his heart that it was the work of God, he went out manfully so as to bring the enemy within reach of his weapon, and attacked iniquity in its high places with a courage exhibited in Wales by no man before, and by no man since; and his success corresponded to his courage, so that his reception at different places was daily enlarged. About this time he went, at the entreaties of several friends, to attack a yearly revel in Radnorshire where dancing and other diversions were carried on. "I usually frequented those places," he writes, "in order to speak to the people, and God was pleased to bless the word to the conversion of some and conviction of many who would not attend preaching elsewhere." He obtained from the crowd on this occasion an attentive hearing, though he sought to bring them to the Saviour by showing them the vanity and danger of their ways. The opposition when it came was more systematic, and proceeded from another source. He was apprehended by two justices, who after heaping upon him much contempt and derision *drew up a commitment*. When they perceived that Mr. Harris was not only willing but well-pleased to go to prison, they sent for some of his friends to bail him, Mr. Harris consenting lest his refusing should be put

* This occurred Oct. 22, 1742.

down to obstinacy ; and so after being bound over to appear at the Quarter Sessions he was dismissed, and departed "filled with joy unspeakable and great glory." When the time for his appearance arrived, he presented himself, faithful to his undertaking, and accompanied by the friends who had answered for his appearing. But a trial, though demanded by Mr. Harris and his friends, was denied, and he was remanded to appear again at the next Quarter Sessions. As he was leaving the court an attempt was made to take away his life. The proceedings were conducted by night in an upper room, which was approached by a high flight of stairs that immediately faced the street. At the top of the stairs a crowd had assembled, and on his leaving the room they began jostling and pushing him about with the express design of hurling him to the bottom. Had their project succeeded a premature end would have brought his career to a close ; but by an especial providence his case was espoused by a worthy magistrate who was leaving the hall at the moment, and snatching the preacher from their hands, gave him the benefit of his protection, and led him home to his own lodging. As he was leaving the town they again surrounded him, began their exclamations, but were awed into silence, and allowed him to pass by on account of the bold manner in which he confronted them and demanded peace in the king's name.

When the session to which his case had been postponed came, and Mr. Harris made his appearance as usual, a prosecution was sought under an Act passed in the twenty-second year of king Charles II. The statute was directed against sedition and illegal assemblies that, under pretence of divine worship, had met together for the purpose of plotting against the king. No sooner had the Act been read than, to the surprise of the whole court, a counsellor stood up on behalf of the accused. He had been employed by a certain gentleman in defence of Mr. Harris, and began to plead that the assem-

blies convened by the preaching of the defendant were not subject to the censure and penalties of the Act, unless they could be charged with sedition and disloyalty, which he contended they could not possibly be. He was therefore clearly of the opinion that the defendant might be acquitted of that charge and suspicion by his subscribing to the Articles of the Church and taking the oath of allegiance to his majesty the king; and as Mr. Harris himself expressed his readiness to do this, it was thought proper to dismiss the case. Previous to this warrants had been issued for his apprehension, but now the magistrates themselves were convinced of his loyalty and conformity, by which they were persuaded of his innocence of the charges that had been made against him.

Other triumphs over magistrates may also be mentioned. When Harris was preaching near Llanilar, Cardiganshire, a gentleman from Abermaed entered the house and endeavoured to break up the meeting. Mr. Harris began to remonstrate, but the intruder hinting that he was a justice of the peace demanded whether Mr. Harris was aware to whom he was addressing himself. "Perfectly," was the response; "I am addressing a creature of dust and ashes, who will tremble at the judgment day." The answer had the effect of sending the magistrate away from the meeting, and the preacher quietly proceeded with his discourse.

A similar experience awaited Harris not far from the town of Carmarthen. He was interrupted in his preaching by a gentleman in authority, who came for the purpose of having him apprehended. Denying the accusations made, he was permitted to continue, and went on with his exhortation with such warmth and humility, and at the same time with such faithful boldness, that the gentleman himself slunk quietly away. From that moment he had peace so far as magistrates were concerned, and access was obtained to several considerable towns of South Wales that had been shut up against him before.

And thus did Howell Harris obtain the victory and establish the right of every subject of the British Sovereign in South Wales to engage in the work of God, without on the one hand going through the harassing formality of declaring himself a Nonconformist and obtaining thereby the protection of the Toleration Act, and on the other without forfeiting his claim to be reckoned a member of the Established Church. Persecution of a legal character was tried upon others subsequently to this date; but so far as Harris was concerned the door was now wide open throughout all the counties of South Wales, and there was not a magistrate who would venture to interrupt. So much did the energy and daring of this remarkable man accomplish.

But, besides the victories that were due to Harris's unflinching courage, he had other triumphs over magistrates, attributable to a higher cause, and entitled to a higher praise. He sent them home from the meetings they had come to disturb, not overawed by his boldness, nor manœuvred out of their revenge, but simply and fairly borne down by the truths he declared. In addition to those instances already recorded, a remarkable conversation took place in 1740, the period to which we have now arrived. He was preaching at Llwynddiddan, in the Vale of Glamorgan, not far from Fonmon Castle, the residence of Mr. Jones, a gentleman of an ancient family, and a descendant of one of those who had signed the death-warrant of King Charles I. Hearing of Harris's meeting he made for it with all speed, accompanied by a party of gentlemen, and having in his hand a drawn sword. In no degree alarmed by his threatening appearance, the preacher simply desired the people to make way, and changing his discourse from Welsh to English for the purpose of being better understood by his hostile visitors, was fortunate enough to see Mr. Jones's horse stick fast in the mud just within hearing distance. The truths which this furious country squire heard on the occasion so affected him

that he became an altered man ; he there and then uncovered his head in token of reverence, bent his soul to receive the yoke of Christ, invited the preacher back with him to his castle, and on going home erected a pulpit in his house for preaching, and was ever after a friend to Harris and the Methodist revival. Mr. Harris had come to Llwynddiddan from St. Fagans, where he had been discoursing at the house of Lewis and Christiana Davies, and having to proceed, according to arrangement, to Cowbridge, was unable at the time to accept of Mr. Jones's hospitality ; but he was subsequently a guest ; the pulpit also was many times used, and was kept for years as a relic in the family. *

While the great revival was thus triumphing in Wales, with scarcely a discordant note as yet to mar the harmony, the Methodists of England were threatened with a breach. The difference began from the persistent opposition of Mr. Wesley to the doctrines popularly known as Calvinistic, and was at the first carried on mainly between him and Mr. Whitfield ; but now, during the absence of the latter in America, the gauntlet had to be taken up by Harris. The points on which they differed, and the state to which matters had arrived, may be seen from the following letter sent by Harris to Wesley :—

“ July 16, 1740.

“ Dear Brother John,—Reports are circulated that you hold *no faith* without a full and constant assurance, and that there is no state of salvation without being wholly set at liberty in the fullest sense of perfection. It is also said that I am carried away by the same stream, and that many of the little ones are afraid to come near me. Letters have likewise informed me, that the night you left London, you turned a brother out of the society, and charged all to beware of him, purely because he held the doctrine of election. My dear brother, do not act in the stiff, uncharitable spirit which you

* Morgan, p. 56. Hughes, “ *Methodistiaeth Cymru*,” vol. iii. p. 93.

condemn in others. If you exclude him from the society and from the fraternity of Methodists for such a cause, you must exclude brother Whitfield, brother Seward, and myself. I hope I shall contend with my last breath and blood, that it is owing to special, distinguishing, and irresistible grace that those that are saved are saved. O, that you would not touch on this subject till God enlighten you! My dear brother, being a public person, you grieve God's people by your opposition to electing love; and many poor souls believe your doctrine simply because you hold it. All this arises from the prejudices of your education, your books, your companions, and the remains of your carnal reason. The more I write, the more I love you. I am sure you are one of God's elect, and that you act honestly according to the light you have."*

It was characteristic of Harris that in elucidating or defending a doctrine he dealt in positive statements of his own views, and more in the bearing of his tenets on experience and life than in the intellectual arena of pure dialectics. His religious life began as a matter of emotion, even before he knew the precise definition of what he experienced; and throughout his career he sought to grasp the truth more through the spiritual perception of the heart than by the hard and severe processes of logic. He made a fair attempt according to his leisure, and ability, which was of a high order, to apprehend the truth in its intellectual bearing; but once his conclusions were formed he cast polemics to the wind, and threw open the windows of his soul to the full play of the heavenly light. This method of direct vision may possibly indicate one of the sources of his almost irresistible energy and influence; as it was almost beyond the power of any antagonist to withstand long the appeals of one so thoroughly possessed by all he uttered. It may also account, in addition to his naturally cautious and peace-

* Weekly History, No. 13, 1741.

loving disposition, and a high regard for the interests of practical piety, for the strong repugnance he ever felt towards all disputation, and for that yearning to see all the promoters of the great revival, and the whole of Christendom, in fact, united in the highest conceivable bonds. An instance of this yearning is seen in the following extract from a letter to Mr. John Lewis, dated, October 4th, 1740:—

“Oh, that I knew how to set forth the glory of God’s distinguishing and unchangeable love! I received a letter from brother Charles Wesley, and one from brother Seward, from which I find that some misunderstandings have arisen between them so as to cause them to separate. I fear that our dear Master is not pleased with this, and that His kingdom will not be thus established. Labour for peace, my dear brother, for though our brother John Wesley is not yet enlightened to see God’s electing love, yet, as I firmly believe that he is one of the elect, God will in His own time show that to him which is now for some wise end hid from him.”

After alluding to some further persecution he had endured at the instance of two justices, he continues,—“I hope to write to brother Seward and the Wesleys. I shall labour to unite them in affection till the Lord more fully unites them in judgment. Shall the servants of Jesus contend for anything but love?”*

Following up his intention of writing further upon the subject, he pens the following letter to Mr. John Wesley, Oct. 10, 1740:—

“My dear Brother,—Tell the believer what made him to differ; what moved Christ to make him a vessel of honour; to give him an ear to hear, a will to submit, and a heart to obey. Preaching distinguishing love brings glory to God, benefit and consolation to the soul, and can be no more a stumbling-block. It is so to none but such as, I fear, never experienced any distinguishing work, and cannot feel that

* Evangelical Magazine, May, 1847.

they were effectually called. To such as are called it is good ; but will feed neither despair nor presumption. It humbleth the soul before God. Its language is, ' Why me, Lord ? ' If electing love is not preached to the soul, it is robbed of its good. The Spirit enlightens the soul to know the Father, and shows him how He has loved him before the foundation of the world, choosing him for no other reason but because it so pleased Him. At this view he does not cavil and dispute, as he did before, when he looked at it by the light of carnal reason ; but he is humbled to nothing in his own mind, being swallowed up and lost in admiring the freeness and sovereignty of His love, saying, If it were not so I should never have been chosen ; for God saw nothing in me but rebellion, lust, pride, anger, unbelief, and enmity against Himself ! He stands amazed at the unchangeableness of purpose that ordered it : though he changes every moment, and forgets God, and is, alas ! unfaithful. Yet still he finds, to his astonishment, that His forgiving love follows him. The soul having this view is exceedingly moved. O, how active he is for God, exclaiming, What ! has the eternal Jehovah merciful thoughts of me, —such a vile rebel ? And am I to be with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to all eternity before the throne, to admire the glorious perfections of the Three in One ? What ! am I, a fire-brand from hell, thus brought to this glorious hope ? What shall I render to the Lord ? O that I had wings to fly, sounding the praises of my God ! O sovereign grace ! O electing love ! O the freeness and richness of it ! O that I had ten thousand lives to be spent in admiring this amazing, infinite, incomprehensible love ! Self is destroyed, the soul has indeed fellowship with the Father and the Son, and participates of the glory above. It is transformed from glory to glory, hates the very garments spotted by the flesh, dreads even the least sin, is humbled so as to be willing to be despised by all and trampled upon for the sake of Christ.

“ My dear brother, a soul that has tasted *that*, cannot help

being grieved to hear this gospel represented as having an ill tendency ; while it makes him more and more like God, and is his Rock, on which he stands firm against all the onsets of Satan and the fears of death.”*

One of the distinguished preachers of the Methodist revival who had embraced the Calvinistic view was Mr. John Cennick. Mr. Harris writes also to him, Oct. 27, 1740, respecting the controversy, and for once he departs from the guarded and affectionate language which he was wont to employ :—“ Brother Seward,” he says, “ tells me of his dividing with brother Charles Wesley. He seems clear in his conviction that God would have him to do so. I have been long waiting to see if brother John and Charles should receive further light, or be silent and not oppose election and perseverance ; but finding no hope of this, I begin to be staggered how to act towards them. I plainly see that we preach two gospels. My dear brother, deal faithfully with brother John and Charles. If you like you may read this letter to them. We are free in Wales from the hellish infection ; but some are tainted when they come to Bristol.”*

It is satisfactory to find that while Harris and Wesley differed in points of doctrine, they were thoroughly agreed in all the practical works of religion, and especially in the duty of pressing unremittingly forward to the acquirement of that holiness which is the ideal of Christian perfection ; but while agreeing in practice, and arriving both at a measure of personal sanctity that left them alone amongst the lights of the ages, they no sooner define their position than we have them differing as to what the standard of perfection really was, and as to how far it was attainable in the present stage of existence. While Mr. Wesley believed in the attainability of “ sinless perfection ” in the present life, Mr. Harris maintained that the inbeing of sin is never fully uprooted. He

* Morgan, pp. 84-5.

* Tyerman's " Wesley," p. 321, from Weekly History, No. 13, 1741.

believed however that its dominion could be broken, and its presence rendered so inoperative that the soul would be practically "free" in the exercise of all Christian duty. The difference between this doctrine of "freedom" and the theory of Wesley was so minute that many of Harris's hearers confounded the two, and hence the frequent allegations we shall find that the latter as well as the former upheld the possibility in this world of "sinless perfection." But the meaning, according to Harris, of the term "perfection" in its application to the soul may best be seen from the following letter, sent to his friend Wesley upon this particular subject. It will be noticed that the arguments are again evolved, partly from Scripture, and partly from the depths of his innermost consciousness.

"I was for some time," he says, "much perplexed about *perfection*. St. Paul applied this to himself, and to many others, in Phil. iii. 15. It was in that chapter that I had the most satisfaction as to what is meant by perfection. I saw that believers are perfect in all respects in Christ, but imperfect as to degrees in themselves. The imperfections of such eminent men as Noah, Daniel, and Job are recorded in Scripture. St. Paul shows in the above chapter the mind that should be in all those whom he calls perfect, which is the same as he himself had. (v. 7—15.) He, however, declares that he had attained perfection only in degrees, but that he was pressing towards it,—'forgetting those things which are behind, if by any means,' says he, 'I might attain **unto** the resurrection of the dead,'—things of which, in part, he was already made a partaker. I think that if anyone has **any** other perfection it would be very proper to ask him these questions:—Has he seen in himself all the sin that he possibly can see? Does he know so much of the glorious perfections of God, and love Him to that degree that he cannot know or love Him more? Does he hate sin and grieve for it so much that he has no cause to lament that he cannot grieve for and

hate it more? Does he approach God with such awe and reverence, and with such a sense of His glory and majesty, and of his own nothingness, as are becoming and suitable? If he cannot answer these and the like questions, let him not pretend to *perfection* in such a sense as no saint in sacred writ, or any of the martyrs, ever pretended to. If he does not see any imperfection in himself, or that he does not fall short of God's glory in everything, I apprehend that he never had any true convictions of sin, nor ever saw the spirituality of the law of God.

“ Thus I have, my dear brother, sent you in the simplicity of my heart my thoughts, according to the light I have from the word of God, and my own experience. Let us, according to the grace given, be diligent and watch over each other; and may we be willing always to give up or maintain anything as we find the word and experience condemn or justify it. That which we do not know the Lord will teach us. Let us be always learning. I hope I write in love, and that you will read it in the same spirit. I trust the Lord will incline your heart to write to me in order to make things clearer. Let us communicate our knowledge to each other; and may the Lord kindly knit our hearts together in all things.” *

The spirit of the foregoing letter is such that it would be difficult to remain long at variance with the person who could conceive it. Its appeals to experience, however, are used for controversial purposes, and differ materially from those more private epistles in which Harris, having a view to edification rather than conviction, sought to stir up the minds of his correspondents to higher attainments in the life divine. We place before the reader a few letters of that character, all written about the present period, and all containing a variety and a depth and a richness of experience, expressed with a fervour that invests them with a unique position amongst devotional correspondence.

* Morgan pp. 87-8.

"To Miss M——, Llwyngwarren,

" Rhos-Tywarch, Dec. 10, 1740.

"Dear Madam,—When you are fully convinced of my end in writing to you, you will not be surprised at it; eternity is at the door. Our hearts are full of devices, the world is full of temptations, and all our nature is corrupt, and draws us from God. God's Spirit may easily in his first working upon us be grieved and quenched, and if he once leaves us we fall to hardness, and carelessness, and indifference, which is the most dreadful condition we can be in. For these reasons I could not help writing to cherish those good desires already seen in you; and oh, that this may find you looking up to Jesus, and comforted with His love; being made quite willing to renounce all for Him, seeing yourself quite lost without Him; seeing Him of more value than ten thousand worlds. If you fall short of Him, and will not be fully united to Him, how dreadful will death and eternity be? What will a good name, blood, beauty, riches, friends and relations avail us then? O dear madam, there is an earnest prayer set on my heart for you, that you may be born again, (Galatians iv. 19.) Be not surprised if I tell you that you must see yourself the greatest of sinners,—even on the same footing with harlots,—for we are all such in heart, though restrained in the outward conduct. Pray rest not until you know that your sins are forgiven. What comfort is there in anything until we enjoy this? Ask it with all your heart and you shall have it.

"Shall you shine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when our dear Lord shall come on the firmament to be glorified in His saints, and in all those that now can see that day with an eye of faith, and renounce all for Him, and choose affliction with His people rather than enjoy all the pleasures of sin for a moment? Heb. xi. 25. O look up to your heavenly Father's house, and you will soon quit earthly joys. Pray give not your eyes to slumber, nor the temples of your head to take any rest, till you find that Christ is in you, and you in Him.

O pray for that broken heart; it is God's gift; ask it and you shall have it; reason not about it, but still run to Christ. If you feel your heart hard, and cannot taste His love, and cannot lay a thing home to heart as you would wish, let not that discourage you from going, but let it make you go the more confidently to Christ. In Him you will find strength when you are weak, light when you are dark, life when you are dead, love when you are cold, comfort when you are dejected, a Friend at all times, and a remedy for all spiritual diseases. O let nothing share your heart with Him; He is willing to take you as you are, a poor, blind, weak, lost, helpless worm, (Rev. iii. 18.) if you are made willing to part with the right eye, right arm, and all for Him: but if He shall not have all your heart He will not take any part of it. If you will not be wholly united to Him, all your sins will meet upon your own head and condemn you in the last day, and all the vials of God's wrath will be poured upon you. O the thought of it is most dreadful, and strikingly awful! Halt not then between two minds! Let either God, or the world and the flesh, have you all. O that I could go with you in my arms to our dear Jesus! There I long to see you; but you must first wear the crown of thorns before you are crowned with glory; you must suffer crosses and persecutions with Christ before you shall reign with Him. Sit down now and cast up the cost. Beware of resolving in your own strength,—that is building on the sand, and your house will fall. You must receive Christ, and then build on Him, and your building shall stand. I shall, according to the power given me, endeavour to think of you; and I shall hope soon to hear you say that you know your Redeemer liveth, and that your sins are all forgiven. Concern for your soul would make it desirable to have a line to let me know how it is with you in the inward man. May the Lord guide you, and lead you into all truth."

"I am yours, cordially in our dear Lord,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

"To Mr. M——, Llwyngwarren.

" Rhos Tywarch, Dec. —, 1740.

"Dear Sir,—The kind reception met with at your house calls for a return of gratitude from me. How does it rejoice my soul that though not many mighty are called and chosen yet there are some that dare own a persecuted Jesus. He will reward all well that can now renounce all for Him. He is now as valuable as ever in the eyes of all that have the light of faith to know Him, and their misery without Him. With what joy shall I meet you before His throne, saying to Him, 'Lord, here am I, and the children which Thou hast given me.' I know we shall be enabled to overcome our spiritual enemies. The way is very narrow, and they are few, few indeed in your station, that find it. O how many ways has Satan to make us rest before we come to Christ. It is dangerous to speak peace when there is no peace. We must mourn before we can be comforted, be wounded before we can be healed, know we are blind before we ask for sight, naked before we are clothed, poor before we be made rich, lost before we are saved, weak before we seek strength, renounce all before we have all, be thirsty before we drink of the water of life, and go out from ourselves and the creature before we come to Christ. It is good to be made sober, meek, and humble; but morality is not christianity, and outward reformation only will not do. It is no common thing to be a christian indeed. We must be born of God; we must have a new heart and have Christ formed in us, and feel the power of Christ's death mortifying the mind and motions of sin; we must find the power of His resurrection raising us up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, to live a life of faith hid with Christ in God; whatsoever is short of this vital union with Jesus Christ is but a delusion.

"O, dear sir, the freedom of spirit and mouth that I had when I was in your house makes me believe you will take it kindly that love to God, and love to your soul, made me in

the simplicity of my heart have a longing desire that you might shine in glory. Therefore let me beg of you not to rest in seeking till you find, nor in knocking till it is opened to you.

“ Let your daughter draw many to the ministry of dear Mr. Thomas, of Pancheston. Beware of sitting under the ministry of blind, dead guides ; beware of consultations with flesh and blood. Were I there I would go many times to hear him, as I could not expect to meet God while I would on any account whatever neglect powerful means. Heart-searching ministers are very scarce, and highly to be had in esteem for their work’s sake. The greatest honour we poor mortals can be capable of is to be persecuted for righteousness’ sake. O what a favour it is to bear reproach for Christ. O let us look through visibles to that within the veil, and then all sublunaries will lose their glory.

“ Dear sir, how I long to find your house become a house of prayer, and every member of it a member of Christ.. O stand up for the sinking cause of a glorious Lord, the mighty Jehovah. Those that will honour Him, He will honour them. I cannot help recommending Him ; it is an honour to be in the meanest office in His house. O that we may hear His voice within us saying, ‘ Well done, thou good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ This is more than to be made kings and conquerors in the world.

“ With my sincere respect to your dear spouse, and all the young ones, I remain, most affectionately yours, in our dear Lord,

“ HOWELL HARRIS.”

“ To Mr. T——, Pancheston.

“ Monachlog, Dec. 10, 1740.

“ Dear Brother,—I could not let slip this opportunity without sending you my hearty wishes for your growth in the knowledge of the mysteries of God’s kingdom of grace in our heart, and may the Spirit of light and power always rest upon you. You have many enemies to encounter, but none so dangerous as self and unbelief, with their inseparable com-

panions,—consulting with flesh and blood, fearing man, and doubting the faithfulness of the most faithful Friend. O, how should we dread self-love, self-righteousness, self-will, self-confidence, and self-wisdom! All these, if not destroyed, oppose the setting up of Christ's kingdom in our souls, and tempt us to deny Him; and they have each of them their armour to defend themselves,—carnal reasonings, and all that are born after the flesh with all their preaching and conversation defend them. O my dear brother, in a teacher that is not receiving from the Spirit of God, nothing is more dangerous than letter-learning, and head or book knowledge. It would be well if we knew and preached no more than we felt; and were willing to be fools till Christ makes us wise,—then we shall be wise indeed. Whatever you may suffer from the blind leaders of the blind, who are a curse to the nation, let me beg you, as I long to see you shine with the faithful at last, be strong in faith, and fear not. Then shall the Spirit of glory rest upon you, and you shall have strength according to your day. I am an instance and a witness of this. My most ardent wishes and prayers are that you may be made faithful. I see we stand in continual need of the Spirit of God to wound and heal us, to cast us down and lift us up, to show us our misery and help us to destroy sin, to work grace and to act with grace when wrought in us, and to make and keep us nothing in our own eyes. Nothing less than Almighty power can do this well. But a sight of forgiving love and a justifying Jesus can make us leave all our idols, and love Him with all our hearts and souls. How can we love Him if we are not persuaded He loves us? Faith is the spring of every grace and all true obedience. And unbelief is the root or fountain-head of all rebellion and disobedience, and feeds every lust. I see but few convinced of the evil or the sin of unbelief, though it makes God a liar, and denies all His glorious perfections, renders the Word of God, praying, conversing, &c., of no effect, bars the heart against Christ, blinds the

mind, destroys the love, estranges us from God, and feeds self-love, lust, slavish fear, and love of the world. And if any, surely much of it remains in the saints. And oh, how does it dishonour God, stop their growth in grace, and give Satan an advantage over them. And most think that to doubt, which is the fruit of unbelief, is to be on sure footing, whereas all ought to be assured that they are out of Christ or in Christ. Most think to go towards heaven by doing, and not by believing,—working for life, and not from life received, with Christ in the head and self in the heart. It is in vain to press to holiness till the root of holiness be in us, which is faith. We cannot grow in sanctification when we are not in a state of justification; it is then we press on to make our calling and election sure. God commands us, and to fear is to yield to unbelief. I know, dear brother, you will not misconstrue my freedom in this, for love constrains.

“Write to, and pray for, your unworthy brother,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

CHAPTER XI.

RAGE OF THE ENEMY.

I N the beginning of the year 1741 Mr. Harris again visited North Wales. He was urged to do so by the invitation of Mr. Robert Griffith, of Bryn Voyno, near Bala, who begged of him to come, and added as an inducement the fact that "there was great reason for blessing God for his last visit to Llanuwchllyn, as several were awakened on that occasion."*

Having made the request a subject for special consultation and prayer he determined to trust God with his life, and proceeded on his journey, notwithstanding it was the depth of winter and bitterly cold. Intelligence of his coming was rapidly spread, and in many places a resolute stand against him and his preaching was determined on. Especially was this the case at Bala, where the enemies of religion seemed bent on making amends for the comparative impunity he enjoyed on his former visit. As he approached the town, whose peaceful slumbers on the bank of the lake afforded a striking contrast to the frenzy of the inhabitants, he happened to overtake the minister of the parish. Knowing or guessing who the stranger was, the minister cautioned him at his peril to desist from his purpose; and when the reformer meekly replied that he came there from a conviction of duty, and that he had no other object than to publish the tidings of salvation without willingly giving offence to any, the anger of the clergyman was roused, and raising a huge club that he held in his hand came forward with abusive language and seemed about to

* MS, at Trevecca,

strike. On Mr. Harris's intimating that when he was reviled he was taught not to revile again, he was allowed to ride quietly forward; but when he entered the town, though he found a goodly company there waiting to hear his message, the sons of Belial prevailed. The latter had come together at the instigation of the parish minister from all parts of the country, for the ostensible purpose of defending the church; and with the view of assisting their pious endeavours a barrel of beer had been placed, at the expense of his reverence, on the horse-block in front of a public-house, with free license for all and every comer to draw from the contents. The effects were so animating that many of them bared themselves of their upper garments, and arming themselves with sticks made such a rush upon Harris and his audience, that at the advice of friends he quitted the street and continued the service in a private house near the centre of the town. To this place he was followed by the mob, who as soon as they heard the announcement of the text, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" gave vent to their rage, to the alarm of the worshippers, by smashing the windows.

During the whole scene the mind of Harris was perfectly calm; his courage and power were strung to the utmost, and his voice rang out clear and strong above the multitude of his persecutors. But when the roughs succeeded in coming in amongst the people it was thought prudent by his friends to ask him to give over. His own impulse was to go on with the service, come what may; for he was now "full of power," and "felt a call in his soul" to deliver his message; and when at the entreaty of his friends he discontinued, he experienced a sense of desertion as if he had been guilty of doing some wrong. Retiring to an upper room he hoped for quietness, but the mob instead of withdrawing became more enraged. Some of them surrounded the house; others climbed on to the roof with the avowed intention of pulling the house down, while loud threats were heard that death would be his fate

should they succeed in getting him into their power. At length night came on, and Harris, after committing himself into the hand of God, thought he might appease their anger by going out into their midst. When he came forth a ruffian seized him by the neck-kerchief, and would have hurled him to the ground had not the knot fortunately given way.

The fury of the persecutors was such that one of them fell into a fit from the transport of his passion. Another was loud for hurling Harris from the top of a rock into the lake hard by. The women also were as fiendish as the men, for they besmeared him with mire, while their companions of the stronger sex belaboured him with their fists and clubs, one of them striking him in the face, others pelting stones and inflicting such wounds that his path could be marked in the street by the crimson stains of his blood. "I thought," he writes, "that it was my lot to die the death of Stephen in the midst of them. I spoke to them and prayed for them." While he was praying a person came forward and desired him to go away, telling him at the same time that he was tempting the Lord by remaining where he was. Acting upon this advice he turned round to depart; not that he had any fear of death or its consequences hereafter, for he was persuaded that death would be to him an entrance to eternal rest, but from an unwillingness to die at the hands of such villains. He had no sooner turned round to make his escape than a repetition of the sense of loneliness came over him and he sank as it were beneath the waves. He was bold when he faced them, and became fearful only when he turned his back. The enemy still continued to persecute both him and his supporters,—some of them pelting him with stones and striking him with sticks and staves, until overcome with exhaustion he fell to the ground at their feet. They still abused him though prostrate; until at length one of the persecutors themselves, either moved by admiration or pity, or perhaps apprehensive of a fatal result and a prosecution for murder if

the abuse were prolonged, became his rescuer, and swearing that they should beat him no more delivered him out of his enemies' hands. When Harris and his friends succeeded in gaining their lodgings they dressed one another's wounds, Harris meanwhile exhorting his fellow-sufferers, and rejoicing with them that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. "It was the first blood I had shed for Christ," wrote Harris, "though often threatened; nor had I now many wounds, for being exceedingly cold my head was tied with a handkerchief on my periwig, which also kept my hat on, so that I had more bruises than wounds."

Jenkin Morgan the schoolmaster, already mentioned, was amongst those who had come to hear and support Mr. Harris, and was a special mark for abuse. He succeeded in gaining possession of his horse, and made the best of his way from the place; but his motions had been watched, and when he came to a part of the road that descended precipitately to the edge of the water, an effort was made to scare the horse and his rider to the depths of the lake.

It may be an indication of the low morality of these persecutors, as well as an instance of the natural judgments of heaven upon characters of the kind, to mention the unnatural deaths by which the lives of some of these men were cut short. The man who threw the first stone at the house to which Harris had withdrawn fell from his horse and broke his neck as he was returning from a fair. The fiend who suggested that Harris should be precipitated from a rock, a short time afterwards met with a fatal accident only a few yards from the same spot. Another lusty and cruel young persecutor, as he was returning home on horseback fell headlong on a stone and fractured his skull. The man whose rage was well nigh the death of him on the day of persecution, died in an agony of remorse for the part he had taken; another was so raging mad on his death-bed that stout men were unable to restrain him from biting his hands and lips; whilst a woman who took

part in the disturbance was so terrified by ghastly apparitions, that the persons in attendance found it difficult to remain in the room because of the horror of her mind.*

The visitor who passes through the town of Bala at the present day will find things in a very different condition from what they were in the time of Howell Harris. The inhabitants are peaceable, and for the greater part of the last hundred and fifty years have been intensely religious, while their spiritual state at the present time is visibly represented on the Calvinistic Methodist side, in a sanctuary of immense capacity and of no mean pretension as to style and decoration. In front of the chapel is a marble monument to the memory of Thomas Charles, who afterwards made the town his home; and on a gentle slope, from which the opposite mountains can be seen, there stands the magnificent Calvinistic Methodist Theological College, for the erection of which £10,000 was contributed. Nor is this all. The Congregationalists, whose interest in the town was so discouraging at the time of Harris's labours, have for many years had their Theological Seminary here, and many are the disciplined youths that have issued from it to bless the land with their ministry.

Of course it was impossible for Harris to anticipate these marvellous results, or the particular form they took. All he attempted was the revival of religion, and to this he devoted himself in the face of discouragements and ill-treatment which would have crushed the spirits of ordinary men. His powerful frame had a capability of endurance with which it is the lot of but few mortals to be endowed, and the heart that throbbed in his breast had the natural boldness of the lion, intensified in his case by the righteousness of the cause in which he laboured, and the strength of his compassion for the souls of his fellow-countrymen. He had come to regard sin as the cause of their misery, and had early been filled with an eternal hatred towards it in every form; and when he threw

* Life of Harris, 1791, p. 51.

himself into the contest to put down the crying iniquities of his day, he was animated by a bold and joyous thrill that bore him onward insensible of opposition.

Howell Harris did not return home after the ferocious attack at Bala. He went on to Carnarvonshire. In the town of Pwllheli, in the promontory of Lleyn, in the county of Carnarvon, there existed one of the half dozen Nonconformist churches of North Wales, and the only one in the whole of that county. This church possessed among its members some excellent men, who were anxious for the revival of religion; notably amongst them was one Francis Evans, of Pen-y-cae-newydd, who was eminent for his piety, and in the estimation of his irreligious neighbours a trifle peculiar on account of the unheard-of custom which he maintained of reading and praying with the members of his family.

This custom became incidentally the means of conversion to one William Pritchard, who afterwards rendered signal service to the cause of religion. Mr. Pritchard was a farmer residing at Glasfrynawr, in the parish of Llangybi, near Pwllheli, and had been blessed with an education superior to the men of his calling in general, but was, notwithstanding, not above the custom of the farmers of his locality, who, as soon as the church service on the Sunday afternoon was over, used to resort to the village alehouse, where they would sit together for hours making merry over their drink. One Sunday night William Pritchard remained longer than usual, and when he attempted to find his way home through the fields he lost his way in the dark, and was attracted three times by the same light. Thinking the circumstance strange he paused to listen at the window, and heard the voice of Francis Evans conducting the family devotion, and was so smitten with what he heard that he became an altered man, and found it spiritually advantageous to associate much with the Independent Church at Pwllheli.*

* Rees p. 397; M.C. vol. i. p. 91.

Notwithstanding the fore-mentioned events the good men of this church were few in number, and their cause was in a languishing state. The great revival had already burst forth in the South, through the instrumentality of Harris, but was scarcely known in the North, except, perhaps, by the faintest rumour. This rumour, joined to the pious longings of his heart, so tintured the thoughts of one John Roberts, of Nant Gwtheyrn, near Nefyn, that he was led in a dream to anticipate the spread of the good work to Carnarvonshire. He dreamt, and lo ! a head approached from the direction of the South, having a brightness that lit up the land, and a voice that awoke and alarmed the inhabitants. Whether he was led to expect the revivalist from that direction from the fact that the church in Pwllheli had always been supplied with pastors from the South, or from some intimation he had already heard concerning Harris, is uncertain.

The statement of the Rev. Lewis Rees was more definite. He had preached at the Independent Church, Pwllheli, on a Sunday during one of his rounds, when the dispirited congregation gathered about him, and began "complaining bitterly that their numbers were rapidly diminishing, that the few who yet remained were for the most part poor, and that everything looked gloomy to their cause." The good minister replied by exhorting them not to be cast down. "The dawn of true religion is again breaking with us in South Wales," he replied ; "A great man named Howell Harris has lately risen up, who goes about instructing the people in the truths of the Gospel ; he visits towns and villages, highways and lanes, and like a great harrow he tears up everything the way he goes." Mr. Rees made mention also of Jenkin Morgan, and at the entreaties of the people Francis Evans was despatched by Mr. William Pritchard all the way to Bala, to bring Morgan over to Pwllheli, to preach and conduct a school. It was thought that the position and influence of Mr. William Pritchard, who was still a Churchman, would be

sufficient to secure for a schoolmaster, accredited by the Rector of Llanddowror, a place at once in the parish church, or in the schoolroom adjoining, to carry on his work. But the prejudice against everything of an earnest religious nature was too strong, and Morgan had to impart his instructions in Mr. Pritchard's own kitchen at the farm-house of Glasfryn-fawr. In this place he taught a number of children as well as adults, and was diligent morning, noon, and night, in teaching, reading, praying, and exhorting publicly, such as resorted to the place to hear him preach. Mr. Pritchard and the schoolmaster were unsparingly abused and slandered for their unwelcome innovation, and all manner of absurd and abominable falsehoods concerning their intentions were circulated in the neighbourhood. They were subjected as well to persecution of a more active and dangerous kind; so that their property and lives were imperilled.

One of the most relentless of the persecutors of the time was Mr. John Owen, vicar of Llanor and Dyneio, near Pwllheli, and chancellor of the diocese of Bangor. This clergyman, who was a bold and haughty man, was a person of considerable talent, a fluent speaker, and a dignitary of the church, and had no small influence amongst the people, but was so envenomed against the religious awakening now beginning to be felt that the record he has left is that of a barbarous persecutor, the Bonner, in short, of the eighteenth century.

In order to excite the spirit of persecution he employed his own parish clerk, who was a gardener, a scholar, a poet, and several things beside, to compose a satirical drama in which Whitfield, Harris, and others, were held up to contempt in as disgraceful and persecuting a spirit as pen and ink could possibly set forth. For this production the parish clerk was lionized by his master, and obtained the applause of the county gentry, who, on his being introduced to them at a party at the mansion of Bodfel, immediately subscribed fifty

guineas in recognition of his talent and the service he was rendering the church. The chancellor further instituted a weekly preaching service at his church at Dyneio, to be held on the Pwllheli market-day, and used to invite his reverend brethren of the neighbourhood to take their turn in decrying from the pulpit the ruinous heresies, and in particular the Methodism that were spreading throughout the country.* In addition to this "It was his practice, in which the clergy generally followed his example, to lead a mob to every place where he found that the Nonconformists or the Methodists intended to hold a meeting. The inoffensive worshippers were abused most mercilessly; pelted with stones, wounded with swords or knives; shot at; men and women were stripped naked in the presence of the crowd; able-bodied men were pressed for the army or navy, and driven away from their families and friends like cattle, to different parts of England. A full account of the sufferings of the Nonconformists and Methodists in North Wales, in the eighteenth century would fill a large volume.†

About the time of which we write Mr. William Pritchard had incurred the displeasure of this formidable opponent, by daring to express in the churchyard, which was consecrated ground, his disapproval of some remarks he had made in a sermon. For this *indiscretion* he was subjected to harassing proceedings for two or three years in the ecclesiastical court. When the case was raised through the intervention of one Councillor Williams to the Civil Court the defendant got free, but his presumption cost him the loss of his farm from which the revengeful chancellor succeeded in getting him ejected.

Howell Harris arrived on a Saturday night in the neighbourhood of Pwllheli, after his inhuman treatment at Bala. His first enquiry on the Sunday morning was as to the place

* * "Drych yr Amseroedd," pp. 78-9.

† "Nonconformity in Wales," p. 373.

where he could hear the best church preaching. He was directed two or three miles further to where the Chancellor Owen officiated. When he arrived at the church he heard such a sermon as he thought "could never come into the heart of man to conceive, or any mouth to utter." The chancellor had been apprised of Mr. Harris's intention, and on that particular Sunday took occasion to forewarn his parishioners in case he should visit the place. He denounced this revivalist, whose heart was bleeding only for the good of his fellow-countrymen, as a minister of the devil, as an enemy to God, to the church, and to all mankind. He spoke of him as the devil's instrument and minister, a deluder, a false prophet; he painted him as worse than any monster heretic, and even than the arch-fiend himself, and concluded by affirming that it was a duty incumbent on the people, out of love to God, and his church, and their country, to join unanimously against such a man, who carried with him such destructive poison which would not only destroy their persons and estates but their immortal souls for ever; and who, for the further purpose of deceiving the people, "made a pretence of preaching gratuitously and not for hire." Little did the parson and his flock imagine that the person thus so fearfully anathematized was a quiet and attentive hearer throughout the discourse. At the close of the service Mr. Harris followed the dignitary into the public-house, where he entered, to consult about setting up some Welsh schools in the neighbourhood, and at the same time expressed his disagreement with what he had just heard from the pulpit. A suspicion at once flashed across the minds of the by-standers that the man who spoke was Harris, and being already primed for mischief by the chancellor's discourse they lay in wait for him on the road, made an attempt to take his horse and began violently hurling stones. He made good his escape without suffering much harm; but the ensuing week was one of such danger that he often thought he should not be permitted to return alive.

The particulars of this perilous week thus summarily passed over are partly supplied by Mr. Robert Jones,* from whom it is seen that the first place in which Mr. Harris preached was Glasfrynfawr, the residence of Mr. William Pritchard. He had no sooner begun his discourse than the parish minister, followed by a gang of unprincipled retainers entered the house and made a rush at the preacher. Perceiving that a disturbance was likely to ensue Mr. Harris discontinued his exhortation, and fell upon his knees to engage in prayer, when the holy man in order to prevent his utterance being heard laid his hand across his mouth.

"What!" exclaimed Harris, rising upon his feet, "would you hinder a man calling upon God in prayer? I shall be a witness against you for this at the day of judgment." "And I shall be a witness against thee, thou filthy vagrant, for traversing the country to deceive the people," replied the clergyman, and then turned to summon forward one of his retainers. The man, however, had been awe-stricken by the allusions to the day of judgment and refused to approach. Mr. Pritchard himself at this juncture came forward, ejected the parson from the house, and shut the door. Mr. Harris made another attempt at preaching, but failed to obtain much freedom on account of the agitation of his mind, and closed the service by urging the company to avoid the fellowship of Godless pastors.

An incident or two from the life of this haughty clergyman will show, that while he was the inveterate opponent of the revival he was not himself on a bed of roses. His own parish clerk became his enemy and had a personal encounter with him in the churchyard; a neighbouring gentleman of the name of Lloyd used to taunt him with his ignorance of Greek; but his most irreconcilable foe was an ill-bred woman of the neighbourhood who went by the nickname of *Dorothy Ddu*, or Dirty Dorothy. This woman preferred charges of a doubtful nature

* "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 64.

against his reverence, and indulged in them with such abusive persistency that she materially interfered with his comfort and health. She way-laid him in all company, and even during service would stand up in front of the pulpit, and swear at him with all her might. Once she was publicly excommunicated, and several times prevented from entering the building by being tied to the gate-post of the churchyard. But nothing could abate the violence of her rage, and when the chancellor breathed his last she forced her way in spite of every precaution, to the chamber where he lay, gave the body a vigorous tweak by the nose, and when the burial was over, which took place at Llanidloes, a distance of eighty miles, she trudged the whole journey on foot for the sole gratification of contemning his memory by a foul and disgusting act upon his grave.*

The next place in Carnarvonshire at which Harris preached was Ty'n Llanfihangel, near Rhyd-y-clafdy. The rumour had already gone in advance that the man from South Wales who had seen a vision was about to come to the locality, and great was the congregation that had come together to hear. Amongst them was a gentleman from the neighbourhood who was exceedingly mad against the new movement, and had brought with him a fire-arm as an indication of his purpose. Through some means or other the preacher was delayed beyond the appointed time, and as the hour for the great man's dinner was approaching, he renounced his intention in favour of the claims of his appetite. He had no sooner turned his back than Harris appeared upon the scene. He delivered his message in the open air, as he did on most occasions, and such was the power attending his ministry that his words fell upon the consciences of his hearers like a shower of fire. "You are accustomed," he remarked, addressing himself to the unconverted frequenters of churches, "you are accustomed to say Thy kingdom come; but what if He were to appear now in power and great glory, with myriads of

* "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 82.

angels, and a flaming fire, would you not rather cry out, O Lord, I am unprepared, let Thy coming be delayed!" *

A divine energy, it is said, accompanied his statements at Rhyd-y-clafdy, so that stout and hardy men could no longer remain upon their feet but swooned away upon the ground, and when they recovered and made their way homeward, they lifted up their voices and wept as if the day of the Lord had come. The following day he preached again at Tywyn, near Tydweiliog, and was further accompanied by the heavenly influence. Some of his auditors were truly converted, and became useful in their generation. One of these was John Griffith Ellis, of whom it was affirmed that when he became an exhorter he excelled in some respects the majority of the preachers of his day. Under the same discourse one of the daughters of Tyddynmawr was converted. This lady subsequently married Mr. Jenkin Morgan, and after her three sisters were also brought to the knowledge of the truth, which happened before the lapse of a lengthened period; the farmhouse of Tyddynmawr became the happy asylum for many a wearied and persecuted minister, at a time when the men of God were far from being popular and hospitality to ministers far from abounding.

Mr. Harris preached also at Rhydolion, and once at Port-in-lleyn. Summing up the account of his journey he says: "I discoursed where the doors were opened, and, as I found since, with success; but as there was now nothing but railing against me in the church, most that were awakened were frightened and ran to the dissenters, who though they are but few in this country, yet seemed to me to be humble and unprejudiced. While I was expounding the church catechism in one place I was astonished by the minister, who was so drunk that he could hardly speak intelligibly or stand; when I went to prayer he came and laid his hand on my mouth to stop me." And again he wrote in reference to the same

* "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 64.

journey: "The clergy, the gentry, and poor ignorant people were so enraged at any attempt of any kind towards reformation that they looked on the whole as roguery and villany and an attempt to undermine and destroy the church. Some of the clergy turned extempore preachers to rail against me."

Making his way home by way of Penmorfa and Traethmawr, Harris had a short time to wait for his passage across the ferry; and here he was again set upon by a gang of men who had murder in their very looks, "but being in chains they could not hurt me much." After escaping their fury he came to Merionethshire, and was hospitably welcomed in the house of a dissenting minister. Crossing the border to the adjoining county of Montgomery he paid another visit to Machynlleth, and thence to Llanbrynmair and other parts of the shire, in order to confirm the souls previously converted, who had now of their own accord begun to form themselves into small societies, especially such as thought it their duty to abide in the church. His life was endangered on this occasion as on the former, but he "was preserved as a prey out of the lion's mouth," and was far from being depressed or discouraged by the perils he faced. The converts he left behind on this, as well as on previous and subsequent visits to the north, participated in a great measure of his own disposition. Their piety was of a simple and primitive type; their taste for sinful diversion was entirely gone; in all things they kept a conscience void of offence, and evidenced by the earnestness of their manner and the modesty of their apparel that they lived in view of another world. They had their affection upon religious subjects, delighted in religious fellowship and conversation, would travel almost any distance to hear the gospel in its purity, held the Sabbath in great veneration, and often delighted so much in spiritual practices that they would pray fifteen times a day, and in some cases the whole of the night.*

* "Drych yr Amseroedd," pp. 66, 126.

This journey to North Wales, notwithstanding its perils, was not without its reward in the enriched experience of Harris himself. "I never had so much acquaintance," he says, "with the nature of self-love, which grew insensibly in me by means of my success. I saw more and more of the depth of all evil in my nature, so that I often wondered the earth was permitted to bear such a monster. I daily observed and had a clearer evidence of the truth of that expression delivered by good Bishop Hooper at the stake, 'Lord, I am hell, but Thou art heaven.' I find as yet I am but a child, and so understand and speak as a child, but the Lord by degrees continued to show me more of the height, depth, length, and breadth of His love in Christ, and led me to know by experience more of His sufferings, death, and resurrection, love and faithfulness. My eyes were more opened, and my spiritual understanding increased to apprehend the mystery of Jesus Christ, who alone in the various characters we have of Him can be savingly known by the operation of the Holy Ghost, as the Door, the Way to God, and the ineffable Majesty Himself. By this light and experience I had deliverance from the Old Covenant and its legal fears, and it drew me also more and more under the law of faith and love, the fruits of the New Covenant, and into Gospel liberty, not licentiousness. The cross was burdensome to my flesh, but I felt my soul growing sweetly under it."

The above extract was written some years after the event, and is recorded chiefly from memory. The following letter, which was penned in the heat of his trials, will furnish a more thorough index to what passed at the time in the recesses of his mind:—

"January 30th, 1741.

"Dear Friend,—Yours I received, and return you abundant thanks for your great kindness towards me, who am the most unworthy and least of all christians. Oh! for strength and grace! There is none but God alone knows what heavy burdens are laid upon poor me, so that I often cry, my soul is

exceeding sorrowful even unto death. I have been since I left you in the very field of battle within and without. I feel my body weak, and my spirit grieved because of sin in myself, and the wickedness that is in the world. But though Satan and his instruments are mighty, yet my God is Almighty, and I can say I am not my own. O, free grace! I think we should be lost in the proper meditation of it. What can I say? Oh, the distinguishing love of God! Oh! what amazing and astonishing grace and sympathizing mercy to such a worm as I, nay, worse than any worms, for they don't sin but I do; and yet blind and black as I am, my dear Lord loves and pities me. Oh, the height, depth and length of His grace! I hear Him whisper to my soul, saying, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Rejoice then, O my soul, and bless God for crosses and trials, for there is an eternal weight of glory reserved for thee. Oh, surely that will be enough to make amends for this little affliction here. Oh, when shall I reach my everlasting home! Indeed, I believe it is but a little while and I shall be at home. Sometimes I feel such decay and such bodily weakness that I think it impossible for me to hold out long. O join with me, and pray, Lord Jesus, come quickly! But oh, what am I, vile dust and ashes? Teach and make me, O Lord, be resigned to Thy heavenly will, and make Thy will be my will. *Amen.*"

"HOWELL HARRIS."

CHAPTER XII.

APOLOGETIC.

THE spirit of persecution, while arising from sources apparently divergent, has its root in the natural resentment of men at finding themselves, whether justly or otherwise, the objects of reproach and censure. Harris in addition to the provocation he gave by his own exalted piety, was wont to carry the warfare into the enemy's camp, and the opposition he endured was fierce and strong. He had already experienced it in the form of cowardly personal abuse, but he was now to have another sting from weapons more polished and keen. Not long after his return from the northern province we find him at work in his native county, and on the eve of a preaching excursion to the western parts of Wales. Being at Pentre Milod, in Breconshire, Saturday, April 18th, he received a paper containing some queries addressed to him by the Rev. David Lloyd, a clergyman who resided near. This Mr. Lloyd was at one time favourable to Harris; he believed his principles to be orthodox and his inclinations good, "and I was," he wrote, "bent upon doing you what service I could in a right way. But I have since had sufficient reason for altering my opinion and resolution; and even now out of regard for your soul I am willing to take some trouble with you." It was no doubt in evidence of that willingness that Mr. Lloyd now sent Harris the note alluded to containing the following questions:—

"Is a commission (or mission) necessary for preaching the Word of God, and for administering the Sacrament, or is it not?"

Who have the authority to give this commission in the ordinary way ?

Was ever a commission given in an extraordinary way without the power of working miracles ?

Was there ever a false teacher that did not pretend to more than ordinary holiness ?

What is schism ?

Who is the father of lies ?

Whose children are liars ?

DAVID LLOYD."

The questions are couched in strong and not over polite language ; but that night, after a period of exhausting toil, Harris sat down and penned the following hurried reply :

" Erwood, Saturday Night.

" Sir,—I received your queries to-day, which I would have immediately answered, or waited upon you in person to give my answer, had I not been pre-engaged to go to Llyswen to discourse, the people staying for me, I having promised to be there at five ; and it being after four when I had done at Pentre Milod, and being engaged to go to Erwood to-night, and having sat up all night last night to write letters, I find myself not well, else would have answered them now ; but having promised to go to Talachddu church to-morrow, whence I am to go with some that meet me there or at Llanddew to discourse after evening service, and where (after) I can't tell till I shall hear there, else would have spoken to you to-morrow. Now as I am going to Pembrokeshire, Cardiganshire, and Carmarthenshire, and can't return before Whitsuntide, I have hereby taken the liberty of sending in love a pamphlet which is mostly abstracted from Dr. Edwards, of Cambridge ; and a sermon of Mr. Whitfield. Let us hear both sides, and I shall be glad to find that all the ministers of our Church did preach its Articles and Homilies, then there would be less need to go about. The latter part of your Queries seemed to savour of an angry spirit, and if so I should

not be forward to answer that spirit but in love and meekness. I hope I shall endeavour to answer every man for what I do, whatever aspersions may be cast on me, whatever spirit you may be of. I could not miss this opportunity of sending you this scrip, assuring you that I long to see you in the last day enabled to say, 'Here am I and the flock committed to my charge.'

"I am, in haste, yours in our dear Lord, to serve you,
"HOWELL HARRIS."

The foregoing letter might in reason and courtesy have been regarded as a sufficient excuse for delaying a more studied and formal answer until such time as the pressure of Harris's engagements would relax; but the Rev. Mr. Lloyd regarded it in the light of a full concession, and in triumph at so cheap a victory he copied out his queries with the reply of Harris, which he characterised as a "shifting and running away," and then had these copies scattered broadcast throughout the country.

After Harris's return from his excursion into the western counties the Rev. David Lloyd writes another letter, dated May 18, 1741, demanding, now that Harris's time and health permitted, that he should answer his Queries. He describes Dr. Edwards's pamphlet as the production of a violent adversary who had been exasperated by disappointment, expresses surprise that Mr. Howell Harris, whom he had once thought well of, should approve of and recommend such books, and then exclaims, with what was no doubt intended for a burst of holy indignation, "Good God! Is this the way to reform? This is not the first time our Church has been aspersed with this kind of slander." The writer after cautioning Harris against heresy, and urging that he should attend more to the scriptures, the doctrine and practice of the ancient fathers, and in particular to the great points of divinity which had been thoroughly discussed by such men as Tyndal, Cranmer, Latimer, Hooper and other most learned

divines and blessed martyrs, continues by asking, "Pray sir, who are the ministers of the Church of England that do not preach its Articles and Homilies, or doctrines consistent with them? Name them that they may be censured. What Articles and Homilies do they not preach? The Church would be obliged to you for discovering: that is the way to prove yourself a true member of it. It is more like a christian to detect real offenders and have them punished, than to throw slander upon any at random. There have always been and there is now, God be praised, a great number of the most learned, most pious and most orthodox divines in the world in our Church. All the churches abroad (except the Church of Rome, our most inveterate adversary and mother of dissenters) approve and admire our doctrine and establishment.

"I can't conceive what need there is of your going about. Is it to preach and teach our Articles and Homilies? Pray sir, what Article is it consistent with to maintain the possibility of a state of absolute unsinning perfection, and of wholly subduing the corruption of nature in this life? By what authority do you go about to do these things? Is it divine or human? No man taketh this honour unto himself. Irregular motions lead to confusion. God is a God of order, not of confusion.

"Pray sir, how came you to imagine that the latter part of my Queries savoured of an angry spirit? I think that I have the Spirit of God; but I doubt you would have people prepossessed in your favour to believe me of an angry spirit, in order to raise in them an ill opinion of me and what I say, and to admire your temper and meekness. Is this fair? This is no new art either; it is treading in old steps. I should be glad to find you able to give substantial and sufficient reasons for what you do; and also to know what strong reasons you gave our good Bishop at Abergwilly. I would have you to know that the spirit I am of is that of love and good order; of unity, peace and concord. I have taken,

do take, and with the help of God shall take, what care I can of the flock committed to my charge. I have kept back nothing that was profitable, neither shall I. I hope I shall be able at the last day to say, 'Here am I; what part of my duty have I neglected?' And I shall be glad to find you able to say, 'I have not misled nor beguiled any unstable souls; I have not spoken evil of the Rulers of God's people; I have not slandered the ministers of Christ; I have not caused any to despise and forsake their own pastors.'

"That God may deliver us from all false doctrine, heresy and schism, and that He may bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived, is the constant and hearty prayer of,

"Your most humble servant in Christ,

"DAVID LLOYD."

It was now full time that Harris should bestir himself to give a reason for his proceedings; and so with a view to a full vindication of himself, his teaching and practices, he wrote out his reply. The length of this reply, the copy of which contains about forty pages of manuscript, sewn together in pamphlet form as if intended for publication, precludes the possibility of giving it full insertion; but its tenor can be gathered from the following extracts.

"To Mr. Lloyd, of Llandwall, on his Queries.

"June 14, 1741.

"When I received your Queries I was in such a hurry that I could not then spare time to weigh them, much less to answer them, and I did not know how to show the christian better than to send you word what the reasons were that I could not answer immediately, lest saying nothing you might take it as if I despised you; but how was I surprised when I found out what a construction you put upon it by calling it shifting and running away. What you will find about the Last Day came from the simplicity of my heart, as thinking

it the only way I could best show my regard till I should have time to send an answer, which I now do as soon as I come home, having not been at home since then till now.

“As to what you say in defence of the clergy in your last to me, I suppose you said rather by way of contradiction to that pamphlet I sent you proving that Arminianism is the Back Door to Popery, than from a mature deliberation, or else you had forgotten that I am an itinerant, and so acquainted with their general character. The laborious, experimental, pious, and successful among them I respect, and honour, and value in my heart for their work's sake; but the scandalous lives and bitter persecuting spirit of many of them should make every sober thinking person rather mourn for them than endeavour to justify them. Everyone that believes in his heart that God will do as He threatens in His Word must tremble at comparing the lives of too many of our clergy with the scriptures; and if it is the indispensable duty of everyone not to hate his brother in his heart, but to rebuke him and not suffer sin upon him in anywise; and if we bear not our testimony against the sin of all men we are guilty with them; and it is not reviling the Church, but saving our own souls and answering a good conscience when, out of a concern for the cause of God and love to their souls, we bring to light the hidden works of darkness and reprove them. Does not the scandalous life of the minister often render ineffectual and invalid his preaching, nay, harden others in their sins? Many of them patronize sin, calling the vanities of the world,—cock-fighting, gaming, dancing,—by the name of harmless recreations, and the meeting in societies to pray and edify each other in the ways of God is to bring the Church into danger, as if the Church is to be supported by ignorance; and when their drunkenness, swearing, pride and malice are exposed, it is exposing the Church. God forbid that these should be the Church! They show to all that their belly is their god, and that they love pleasure more than they love

God. Surely you do not take upon you to defend such, but should rather bear your testimony publicly against them, as being the greatest if not the only cause of separation from our Church. How can those that never saw their own danger show their danger to others? How can they preach against sin with any authority or hope of success that live in sin, and how can they preach Christ who never knew Him but by the letter? And yet such is the generality I see: they preach—some once a month, others in English to a congregation of poor blind ignorant creatures who understand little or no English, and come and go as heedless as if they had been in a market; and yet how many scores of parishes may you go to and not find one man as much as reformed, much less inwardly changed by all the preaching; and yet the cry is, ‘What need is there that you should go about?’

“Then there are our wakes, which I find took their origin from the consecration (as it is called) of the church to some saint or other, and so to the memory of that saint still there must be an annual feast kept of gaming, drunkenness, fighting, many poor families being thereby reduced to ruin; nay, the very holy days which our good reformers set aside to be spent in the service of the Lord, are now so become days of all vanity as if it were more lawful to give ourselves liberty than to indulge ourselves; and yet such whose immediate place it is to speak, instead of saving their own souls and endeavouring to save others by lifting up their voices, rail against such as do. Shall I see this dreadful evil and not speak? God forbid I should so learn Christ as to deny Him before men. Let me be charged with being a false prophet and assuming to myself an office that does not belong to me, yet through the power of God, that has brought me thus far, I am resolved to behave so that none shall prove me a false teacher in the last day, or that I have taken a work in hand that the Lord of Hosts did not call me to. While I see the country dead in sin I must speak out; and let those that are resolved to oppose look to themselves lest they be found fighting against God.

“ There are some who seem by the multitude of their riches to be above reproof, their ministers fearing to do it because they respect the persons of men, and lest they should lose preferments and some good liquor ; but whatever I must suffer for it, through the help of God, whether they hear or not, while my legs are not chained I shall in love to their souls, and as I long to see them all redeemed from the slavery of the devil and shining in grace and good works and a terror to evil doers, bear my testimony against their practices,—and such of them as are of God will take warning,—as long as I shall be enabled, and spare no man ; for when He withdraws His power from me I feel I am ready to deny Him ; and though I am called a reviler I am not so accused in my own conscience, for I hate no man, and God knows with what concern I look at the face of things, and that it is nothing but pity to souls and concern for the name of Jehovah that makes me speak ; and though I should be confined and put a stop to, I don't question but the Lord would raise up some others that would speak the truth and open their mouths against the sins of all.

“ Your loving epistle to me, which I really take as from a concern in you for me according to the light in which things appear to you, I thank you for, though you may mistake in your thoughts of me. I am willing as one christian to another to answer any reasonable questions asked according to the time and measure of knowledge given me. Your seeming to see no need of my going about, and objecting to it made me so tedious. I told you at first, some years ago, what were my motives in going about, and I thought the effect it had on many in your own parish, who by their lives outwardly give account of the inward change, would satisfy you whether it is not evident that it is the will of God I should go. Thus you yourself did see and weigh formerly, and were satisfied. You know how they openly profaned the Lord's Day, and went on that day from one parish to another to get drunk and quarrel

and swear; and how they never prayed in their houses, never attended the Lord's table, and were thoughtless of another world. Do not you know how many ways you strove to reform them by preaching and even threatening them with the civil power, and all to none effect. The first time I came among them I was an object of their ridicule. Is not the change you see in them abiding, and does it not continue to answer for me in your conscience? Was the power that turned them of me? was it of Satan? . Whence came it then but from God; and could it come from Him unknown to Him? As I trust it was not my own parts and eloquence but the power and blessing of God, while my feet are not chained I am, through the help of God, resolved to do all I can to draw poor souls to look after their interest in Christ, and to awaken them out of their spiritual slumber.

“As to my opinions I am, and according to my light am resolved to continue, a member of the Church of England, never to discourse to my knowledge in time of divine service, always attending on it myself; and as to my hearers, wherever there was a sound heart-teaching minister, in any church, I always recommended all to his ministry; and where by reason of the carelessness and blindness of their minister they were obliged to go to other parishes, or to hear a godly man of any denomination, I always exhorted them to receive the sacrament as often as it was ministered in their own parish churches, if it was solemnly and decently administered. Many scores I believe the Lord has owned my poor endeavours to keep from leaving the Church.

“I think you asked me what answer the Bishop gave me when I was before him; but I suppose you know his objection was to my going about. What questions were asked, according to my weak capacity I boldly answered. As to the character you give Dr. Edwards, I am a stranger to it; but I think you wrong him by calling his reasons railing.

“You asked what Articles, &c., are not preached? I am

sure I seldom hear the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, seventeenth, &c., preached anywhere.

“As to your Queries, though they may not be answered by a yea and nay, yet I think they need no great study to give each of them an honest answer.

“1. Is a commission necessary for preaching the gospel and administering the sacrament, or not? If you mean a divine mission, I say that it is absolutely necessary. It is the opinion of our Church that the Bishop must not as much as examine any to that end unless they can affirm first that they are moved by the Holy Ghost. But I suppose that you mean chiefly a human commission. I answer that it is absolutely necessary to administer the sacrament, but not absolutely necessary towards preaching and exhorting and opening the scriptures. Eli quotes on that article of our Church that forbids laymen preaching, that in time of extraordinary persecution a layman may publickly teach,—so that necessity makes it lawful; and if so I think it may be easily proved that there never was more necessity than now. And if it were not right for a person unordained to preach, yet when he has in form and order submitted to the ordinary way of admission, and has been rejected again and again, any judicious moderator asked to consider the real good that has been done could not help judging favourably of my going about, and not think it a crime.

“2. Who have authority to give this commission in the ordinary way? My refusing to accept of ordination often by the Dissenters, and offering myself so often to the Bishops, answers for me that it appears to me Episcopacy is the right form of Church government.

“3. Were any ever called in the extraordinary way without a power of working miracles? I answer, yes; it is expressly said of John the Baptist that he did no miracle.

“4. What is the meaning of the word Schism? I answer, to divide or make a rent in the Church of Christ; or to leave a certain body of men being a church of Christ, and having

The Sacrament

His word and ordinances in their purity amongst them, and who follow Him in faith and practice, and that without sufficient cause, and without showing his reasons and scruples, and receiving all true light to satisfy his mind that may be offered. I can't think him guilty of schism who scruples to take the sacrament from the hands of a common drunkard, swearer, and when there is no manner of discipline, but all admitted however vile. That is the schism that I mostly warn all to beware of which cuts us off from union with our head Christ, and consequently from that communion of saints which the children of God feel one with another by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts.

"5. Was ever a false teacher without a pretence of more than ordinary holiness? To this I know not how to answer, as I don't know all the false teachers nor what their pretences were. But shall we cease pressing forward because some false teachers pretend to more than ordinary holiness? I am sure that by unbelief and endeavours to work holiness in myself, instead of going still to Christ by faith, I am to my shame far behind many that set out after me.

"6. Can a man live without sinning in this life? Answer: You know what is said in 1 John iii., 6, 8, 9.

"7. Who is the father of lies? Answer: The Devil.

"8. Whose children are liars? Answer: The Devil's; but all who by the strength of temptation and thoughtlessness are left to themselves, and are tempted to tell a lie, are not his children,—as Abraham when he denied his wife, and Peter when he denied his master.

"Thus I have answered you, and feel now that I love you, and should be glad at any time to have your mind where you see me wrong. I shall endeavour thankfully to weigh what shall be said. I now take the liberty of sending *you* some heart-searching questions, which I think may be of use if printed in Welsh and made common. I should be glad to know your mind.

"H. HARRIS."

The letter from which the foregoing extracts are taken was dated June 14, 1741; but for some reason or other it was not sent to Mr. Lloyd till about a year and a half later. It contains a powerful apology for the seemingly irregular methods of Harris, and though unsparing in its denunciation of sin, is conceived in a charitable spirit. But beside the subjects mentioned in the above citations, there is a reference in Harris's letter to some remarks that had been made by the Bishop of London. In a pastoral epistle that had been issued by his lordship, he had stated "that faith in Christ is the foundation of a christian's title to heaven; and that repentance and good works are the necessary means of obtaining it."* This sentence appeared to Harris to assign a precedent and meritorious position to good works; instead of making them, as he conceived, to be the outcome of a life of faith implanted in the first instance in the heart by God; and as he was apprehensive that many of the clergy were given to this legal method of presenting the gospel, he expressed himself to that effect both in his preaching and in his correspondence with the Rev. Mr. Lloyd. "I fear," he wrote, "that too many are of the mind of the Bishop of London in his pastoral letter, who though he says faith is the foundation, yet says that repentance and good works are the necessary means to obtain this faith."

How far this construction of Harris is a correct interpretation of the Bishop's words must be left to the reader, without troubling him for the present with Mr. Lloyd's learned proof that the word "title" and not the word "faith" is the proper antecedent to the neuter pronoun at the end of the Bishop's sentence. It is evident upon the face of the words that Harris is giving a general impression from memory; but upon the strength of his rendering his antagonist had not scrupled to charge him with mendacity, and with being the offspring of the progenitor of lies; and in the further correspondence

* The sentence is given as quoted in Mr. Lloyd's letter.

that took place he continues to hurl charges which leave no doubt, whether he was angry or not at the beginning of the controversy, he was thoroughly roused before it closed. He reiterates in a letter, July 12, 1743, the complaint that Harris had not properly answered, with a "yes" or "no," his plain and easy Queries; he charges him with taking great encomiums to himself, and with giving a very uncharitable character to the clergy in general, and to the "learned, pious and orthodox Bishop of London in particular." "You left out," he says, "the main part of his sentence, and put in some of your own, and perverted him to say what you pleased; whether this was wilful and malicious or not, God and yourself know best. It is well known how free you made with his character in your preaching, and all upon your own invention." He then denounces him plainly with slander and falsehood, and calls upon him to repent and seriously consider his position. Mr. Harris wrote again, April 6th, 1743, to say that were he sensible he had wronged the Bishop's character he would freely acknowledge his fault as the gospel directs; but nothing would satisfy the now irascible vicar but charges of "crafty and diabolical misrepresentation." "You say that what you did was for conscience' sake. Was it for conscience' sake you perverted a whole sentence of plain English? Nothing is abused more than religion and the Holy Spirit. Religion is made the cloak to all villany, gain is become godliness, and the Holy Spirit is made the author of all absurdities, nonsense and blasphemy; but the Spirit will do Himself justice at last. I verily believe you can't be so blind, so stupid, so ignorant as you pretend. Your own conscience, if you have any, must know it already and fly in your face when you endeavour to smother or shift it off. For God's sake, for your own soul's sake, do not make light of these things, and prevaricate with God Almighty, who sees all. I pray God to forgive you; but my prayers can prevail nothing unless you repent." Again once more, June 29, 1743, Mr. Harris condescended to reply.

“He had written honestly as he had taken the Bishop’s meaning to be ; and if he had made a mistake he was willing to acknowledge it.” But the envenomed vicar was now beyond all cure, and after a parting variation on the shuffling and invention of which he says Harris was guilty in connection with the Bishop of London, he makes a stand for his own character and that of his fellow-ministers in general. “I am not for quarrelling,” he wrote, “neither am I for misleading any ; but for preventing disorders, for getting everybody in the right way according to the word of God, and for saving if I could the souls of all. If I do not endeavour to put all in the right way that I see out of it, woe be to me. The clergy should lead exemplary lives as well as preach sound doctrine. They are the salt of the earth ; they are the city on a hill. They are to expect no pity or favour, especially from such as you are, who do all you can to expose them and to make their labour fruitless, to make the world shun them and worry them. I am sure I should be ashamed and sorry from my heart to see a clergyman drunk, or to hear him swear, or to hear of his being at a cock-match, or without family devotion, or guilty of whoring. But who are they ? Why not name them ? Are all so ? God forbid ! The clergy are but men (I excuse none)—frail men like others, excepting the unsinning Methodists ; allowing that some are so unhappy and weak, is it fair to charge the crimes of a few on the whole order, and say that because a few are so therefore all are so ?

“You confidently say, ‘I never believed sinless perfection in my life, much less pretended to it.’ Whether you ever did believe it or not I can’t tell ; but I have good reasons to believe you taught and maintained it. Have you forgotten what passed between Mr. David Lewis and you at Talachddu ; between him and you with the famous Daniel Rowlands at his house in Cwm-y-ddau-ddwr ? I have heard of your unparalleled assurance (it deserves a worse name) at Garth, and your rude behaviour towards the good lady there in denying

your own words against three or four witnesses. Strange assurance! Do you believe there is a God, and He an Omniscient one? Do you think of giving an account for what you say and do?

“You seem to complain that some persons are refused the sacrament. I hope no clergyman doth refuse it to anyone of his own parish without good reasons. I hope also you would not have any clergyman prostitute such a sacred thing, or give it to any that are not of his congregation or assembly;—to any that divide and separate from him upon pretence of greater purity,—to any that condemn our doctrine and our worship. Can you reckon those of our communion who never come to their parish church to our assemblies but upon sacrament days, and then stay out until the communion service, and in the evening of that day go we know not where—to meeting-houses, &c. These are your disciples and followers. Is nothing done rightly in our church? Is our worship but administering the sacrament? Do you think that coming to church and receiving the sacrament once a month is sufficient to give one the name of a Church of England man? You have strange notions. Is not this making a tool of the body and blood of Christ? Is not this making the sacrament a cloak for schism and hypocrisy? Is it not to deceive people to seem to be of the Established Church when at the same time they are for destroying it root and branch, and maintain doctrines of the wildest enthusiasm, I may say doctrines of devils, from which I pray God to deliver all men.”

The controversy between Howell Harris and the Rev. David Lloyd is here brought to a close. In justice to the latter it must be admitted that he was a formidable antagonist, and doubtless a man of good intentions and exemplary life,—a representative, possibly, of a goodly number of pious and scholarly clergymen who could be found here and there amongst the parishes of Wales, but so quiet and inoffensive that his meek unobtrusive life had as little influence in

disturbing the appalling ignorance and ungodliness of the country at large as the more open and avowed conformity to the world of the majority of the parish ministers of the day.

It was this prevailing indifference on the part of the ministers of his church that had stirred the depths of Harris's soul. He was a witness of their glaring inconsistency. He saw and pitied the poor deluded people that were kept in darkness and danger by the neglect of their pastors. He mused over the state of things he saw around him, and the fire burned in his soul. He regarded it as a dishonour to God and a snare to men; and in the heat of his anger he came forth to denounce iniquity, setting himself up, not as the Rev. David Lloyd would have him do, as an accuser of his brethren in the ecclesiastical courts, but as a religious reformer. He sought in the first place to awaken the clergy, and then he sounded an alarm for the inhabitants of the land in general. He cried aloud and spared not, and as one after another, in obedience to the summons, came forth from the dens of darkness, he befriended them spiritually and sought to bring them to the path that leads to unmingled light.

It was natural that those new-made converts, on opening their eyes upon an entirely new world, should give vent to the exuberance of their astonishment and joy in extravagant and sometimes irrepressible rapture. Mr. Harris himself was not favourable to those demonstrations. He apprehended the mixture of a physical element with what was purely spiritual; but where the emotion was undoubtedly genuine he appreciated the cause, and was unwilling that anyone should impugn the great work on account of what was merely adventitious.

It will be remembered that when the Rev. David Lloyd's queries were placed in the hand of Harris, on Saturday, April 18th, 1741, he was then about commencing an excursion to the south-western parts of Wales. During the journey he made the usual call at Llanddowror, and found to his grief that inimical busybodies had been at work endeavouring to

prejudice the mind of his friend and adviser Mr. Griffith Jones against the Rev. Daniel Rowlands and himself, and in particular against the methods prevailing in the conduct of the work and in the gatherings of the converts. It is certain that the scruples of Mr. Griffith Jones would be conceived in a friendly spirit; but as Harris was anxious to overcome, if possible, not only the objections of opponents but the misgivings of friends, he sent, upon his return to Trevecca, the following respectful and affectionate letter of defence to the worthy Rector of Llanddowror.

“ May 15, 1741.

“ Dear Sir,—I have since I parted with you heard so many things that seem to prove strongly that the enemy is let loose upon us in a way not expected, to divide those who love the Lord Jesus more dearly than their lives. I could not rest without writing a letter to you, and I am persuaded you will receive it in the same spirit in which I write. Should not we be very tender and cautious in hearing with both ears, before we pass judgment. I hope that, notwithstanding all the calumnies cast upon me, I am justified in this, that I would not for ten thousand worlds expose men or doctrines that have sufficient evidence they are sent of God. I request all whom I suspect, to see whether they have the demonstration of the Spirit,—whether the idol self be discovered in setting up itself in the heart against Christ in his offices, and assuming all the work of the Spirit to itself,—and whether the law has appeared to them in its spirituality; to show them they are dead to it, and that they must go to another for life? I was reckoned a good christian before ever I had the full inward sight and became quite condemned by the law. The sovereign Lord then wrought faith in me to lay hold on Christ's imputed righteousness. But I must bless God for that christian simplicity and brotherly love manifested in asking heart questions of one another, which has been the means the Lord blessed to open my eyes. I also mention

some things in the fellowship meetings from the same love and for the same end, as it was done to me. This calling upon others to give an account to me is reckoned spiritual pride; as if I assumed something which I ought not. But I leave my Lord to answer for me. O, dear sir, mistake not my end nor my spirit; for at this moment I could write with tears of love to you. I am and ever was persuaded that I shall see you shining in glory. It is the concern of the Lord's cause that makes me write to you, not cunningly and artfully, but in simplicity, in the spirit of our common Lord, and from the abundance of the heart.

“On hearing Mr. Rowlands, about four years ago, experiencing myself the power of the word under him, seeing the visible sign of power in him, and the ardent effects of his ministry in the calling of some within my own knowledge, I was persuaded of the Lord's being with him in a more than ordinary manner. That these persons were called effectually appeared from their brokenness of spirit, humility, love, and watchfulness, as well as from what they said of the work of grace in themselves,—with their simplicity of mind, and growing acquaintance with the evil and plague of their own hearts. Such were the signs of conversion under his ministry in hundreds from time to time, which I saw. It was not difficult to read a broken heart and a humble spirit in their streaming eyes. Some have applied to me, crying ‘What shall we do for an interest in the Saviour?’ And on asking when they came to be thus concerned about the state of their souls, they have owned that it was not until they heard Mr. Rowlands in such a place. Many when they are thus awakened, complain that they hear of nothing elsewhere but duties,—no food for faith, no discoursing on the stratagems of the devil and his way in keeping them from Christ, of the mystery and difficulty of believing and of denying their own righteousness, their own wisdom, and their own sufficiency. They never hear elsewhere of the various workings of unbelief,

—how it keeps the soul from Christ, and of their utter helplessness and blindness;—that they, notwithstanding all their reading and studying, are but natural men,—that until the Spirit opens their eyes they cannot see the holiness and purity of God and their own impurity, the excellency of Christ and the various workings of sin and grace, of faith and unbelief.

“When the difference is shown between light in the head, that comes from second causes and affects neither the will nor the affections, and that which comes from the Spirit of God through His own word; and when cautions are given against reading unsound authors, an outcry is made that human learning is wholly laid aside; whereas it appears from a sermon of Mr. Rowlands now in print that no one is more for reading the Bible than he is. He also reads all the old experienced authors he finds. I know he gathers and gives as much time as possible to reading. But having three congregations of between two and three thousand to look after, and being called out to preach almost every week, and to build up hearers in a more private manner, he cannot have much time for reading. But if you were to hear him and witness the effects of his preaching, I believe that all your prejudice would fall to the ground, and that your soul would be united to his in divine love. I am persuaded you are both sent by the same Lord; and if severe persecutions should come, you would be two of the first called to the flames together, to ascend to the same place, to praise that distinguishing eternal love, to all eternity, that called you from so many thousands and made you to differ. And shall anything now divide you? I feel there is nothing nearer my heart than union between all the faithful labourers of Christ, and that their hands may be strengthened to the utmost.

“But I find many that I once thought would come on, resting,—some on their duties, some on their works, prayers, tears, and feelings, who never had the deadly wound to see that they must be damned unless covered with Christ's

righteousness, and His nature wrought in them. Others rest in convictions, without any life, divine love, fellowship with God and Christ, and without growth in knowledge of themselves and of our dear Lord. Others fall back to the world to love it as much as ever ; others to their old sins and to a careless, lazy, carnal spirit, keeping up the old form of godliness. These are the most ready to oppose. They, in a most artful manner, not willing to be searched and cut to the heart, take away perhaps a word or half a sentence, not fully explained, and carry it to others that may be the children of God, which may stagger them. It is true an unguarded expression may be spoken from the vehemence of our soul. I believe that when you look a little calmly you will find that all aspersions against Rowlands come from such a spirit. As to what has been reported of some expressions used by him in preaching, I am persuaded they are false. It is true that when he has been informed that they were mistaken by his hearers, or not explained in the sense which he intended, he has had the humility to correct what was not clearly stated.

“ I find that there are some people who make it all their business to gather, and set all in the blackest light, in order to divide you. There are but few faithful ministers, especially in this dark benighted church, and shall they be divided ?

“ As to crying out, some I have seen and spoken to. They were so penetrated by the word that they could not help crying out, some on seeing that they were lost, and others on seeing that they had pierced the Son of God by their sins ; whom if you had seen you would have had no scruple about, but have blessed God on their account. There is, it must be confessed, much of the evil spirit and hypocrisy in the crying out of some. I publicly objected to it, and Rowlands thanked me.

“ Their singing together on the way has much simplicity in it. The heart being thus kept heavenward, trifling thoughts

as well as idle talking are prevented. When my heart is warmed by love I cannot help singing, even if I am hoarse.

“ Their speaking to or embracing each other in love, I am sure was also in great simplicity. I find such love in my own spirit towards you that if I were near you I could not help embracing you in the love of God, which others may construe into imprudence.

“ I have been informed that it has been told you that Rowlands does not speak well of you, which I am sure is not correct. Such is his opinion of you that when any wish to be admitted to communion, if he finds that they have been under your examination his usual way is to raise his hand and say, ‘ If you have been there, I have nothing to say after him.’ I have always heard him speak of you with great esteem. As to your books, I never speak to him much about them ; but his selling and encouraging the sale of them is a sufficient proof of his approbation.

“ With respect to the charge of his holding sinless perfection,—when I read to him my letter to Mr. Wesley against *his* perfection, he was the most earnest in persuading me to send, and even to publish it. As to his holding that there is no true faith without full assurance, I have heard him say that doubting is like a city through which all saints pass, but none can be satisfied until God sends the Comforter, the Spirit of adoption, to bear witness with their spirit that they are born of Him. Then they drink the water of life, sup with Christ, and He with them. Their eyes being spiritually enlightened, they understand what full and complete satisfaction the Son of God hath made to divine justice for all who believe. This they are enabled to apply to their own hearts, having the testimony of the blood and of the water also, or the ‘ washing of regeneratiou and renewing of the Holy Ghost,’ which is known to be of God by comparing it with the word.”

CHAPTER XIII.

AS A CORRESPONDENT.

I N proportion as the uncompromising honesty of Harris brought upon him the vengeance of some of his Church of England brethren, and caused him to be regarded as an enemy to the Church, he was admired and courted by the Dissenters of his day. "At first," he says, "they liked me much, as I was encouraging the people to go *anywhere* to hear where Christ was preached, and where they found most benefit. And when they found their places of worship thronged by such means, I was for some time much respected by all parties, and did not want encouragement from each party to join them."

His controversy, however, was not between the Established Church and Dissent as such, but between sin on the one hand and holiness on the other, and between the legal method of arraying the truth and the presentation of the Lord Jesus as the only source of deliverance from the dominion as well as from the power of sin; and as he dreaded all disputes about mere externals as likely to injure newly awakened souls, he felt bound in conscience to confine his efforts purely to the revival of religion irrespective of sect, and to remain as a member of the national church.

He found besides, from the experience he gained, that all the evils of the day were not confined to the Episcopal fold, nor all the good monopolised by Dissenters; and as the latter were tainted with bigotry, lukewarmness, worldly-mindedness, and the legal method of preaching, he thought it his duty to

bear his testimony against them as well, and of course by doing so incurred their displeasure. "Many of them," he says, "waxed cold towards me, others disputed with me and thought it their duty to weaken my hands as much as they could."

The Rev. Edmund Jones, himself a staunch Dissenter, was equally grieved with the lax views and inconsistent lives of his more immediate brethren, and had to experience their sneers whenever he sought to reprove them; but while admitting the justice of Harris's corrections, he was at the same time apprehensive lest his intemperate zeal and furious lashings would do more harm than good, and so wrote to him to London, August 7th, 1741, a remonstrance upon the subject.

"Blessed be God," he says, "who blesses Mr. Whitfield's and your labours after him so much in and about London. I am very desirous of his great success in Scotland, where religion was at first planted and afterwards defended by some of the most glorious providences that I have read of. Oh! how wonderfully are you both honoured, while I am of so little use that I cannot but mourn over it, and be ashamed of myself, though I do from time to time offer my service to God's cause, and ask Him what will He have me to do for Him. Many are they that hate me; and my friends are but few, yea, the Labourers in my Lord's harvest would not allow me even to glean after them. While the men of this world give a sheaf or two, especially the more generous among them, to poor workmen, nobody would do me that kindness; but when I offered to take up any ear of corn that lay before me another enviously would take it, yea, and run to take it. Thus Dissenters, and those who were not for discipline, dealt with me; thus the bigoted Churchmen, the Baptists, and even the Methodists have dealt with me in many new stations; but if this be the Lord's will I am content, and adore and bless it; and only desire that I would not be of no use before

the Lord. Let me die now rather than devour His mercies and be of no service to His cause.

“I am fully of your mind, dear brother, that there are but few that wholly come out from the world to follow Christ. But there is a cursed conformity to it, and the fear of being counted fools makes men conform to some of the world’s principles, and self-love and self-seeking make them conform to its practices ; not considering that according to men’s conformity or non-conformity to the world they are conformable to or dissenters from Christ, and consequently good or bad.

“I now begin to collect some help for the building of the meeting-house, and will go about both the meetings and societies where I am anything acquainted and shall be received. If you are acquainted with some desirable Dissenting ministers and people, I desire you would ask them some small assistance towards the building of our meeting-house,—something which they can easily spare. If you will do me some service this way it will be a great kindness indeed, and perhaps in time I shall reward you ; but if I do not, God will.

“There are more of our Dissenting ministers, who are friends of the Methodists, than you mention this side of the country, beside Mr. Henry Davies, Mr. Philip Pugh, and myself, viz., Mr. Lewis Jones, Mr. Joseph Simmons, Mr. Owen Rees, Mr. William Williams, Mr. Cole, &c. ; but perhaps they will not act much ; but you know our Lord’s saying—‘ He that is not against us is on our side ; ’ and I cannot but observe that they are our best men who are favourable to you, and that they are for the most part dry and inexperienced, or Arminians, that are against you—at least, who are bitter. Though indeed, while all of us allow you to exhort, though unordained and not called in the usual way, but called extraordinarily, yet we cannot still allow of others going on without a rule, much more that there should be a succession of them still rising up ; for this may be the means of bringing an unneces-

sary persecution upon the church of God, and of shutting the door of liberty in this nation; for though we have seen enough already to excite persecution, yet on men's part nothing but pure duty should be the external cause of it.

"I am glad Mr. Whitfield hath borne his honest and bold testimony against the lukewarmness and worldliness of Dissenters, and against the loose walking and levity of some of their ministers. There was the greatest need in the world of it; but Mr. Whitfield doth it in a prudent, though yet honest manner; and had you, dear brother, done this with less passion and intemperance of spirit, and with more prudence and distinction, observing a regard to their persons, you might have done much good; but as it was I fear it did but little good. It is my presumption upon your honesty and self-denial makes me venture to tell you this much; but I see our own much greater fault. We should have borne our just reproof, and be humble, and confess our great degeneracy before God and man, and strive to reform. Some were humble, and took it so; but most were proud, and rose upon it, to our greater shame and guilt, especially when it came from the man whom God owned so much to do good. We should have borne with you as with younger, if not as weaker brethren; and where, through Satan's temptation, some of you carried things somewhat intemperately, and too far, yet we should have either held our peace, or have used entreaties and mild argumentations; but Satan puffed us on the other side to undue resentments, as it did some of you to undue provocation on the other hand.

"I wish some of the sound Dissenting ministers separated from the erroneous and loose Dissenters; but perhaps it will come to that. Both the ministers of Penmaen deny that there is any need of discipline among them, and call my attempts of discipline by the opprobrious names of rigid, punctilious, and novel customs; upbraid my friendship with the Methodists, whom they call my new friends, but tell me

that I had as well or better, or to that purpose, have accorded with my old friends, &c. Thus these men refuse to be reformed—the more is the pity.

“I am concerned to hear how Accord and Rogers, and some other person, whose name I have not heard, should turn Anabaptists. Were they Antinomians or no? Let me know in yours. And, dear brother, I here take occasion to desire you to guard people from Antinomian errors, when you lead them to the doctrine of free grace; for that is a rock where many have split; and when they become Antinomians, they will readily turn Anabaptists: and while you exclaim so much against the lukewarmness of our Dissenters, do not neglect warning of the spiritual pride and intemperate spirit of the Baptist Dissenters, which are yet worse, though accompanied with the zeal which the other lukewarm Dissenters want; otherwise you may occasion the turning of your friends to the Anabaptists. So subtle is the enemy, that under pretence of advancing free grace, he hath pushed on thousands to the Antinomian whirlpool; for which reason I humbly give this caution.

“Let me have an account of these men, and of what Mr. Stennet hath done in the matter. Your answer to mine, which I desire may be soon, in expectation of which I remain your unworthy brother and servant in the Lord Christ,

“EDMUND JONES.”

“P.S.—If you can get Dr. Goodwin’s works at second-hand, very cheap, in London, as perhaps you may (else do not buy them), bring them down with you, or a second-hand Flavel, and I will pay you for them, to dispose of them to young preachers.

“*For Mr. Howell Harris, to be left at Mr. James Hutton, bookseller, at the Bible and Sun, near Temple Bar, London.*”

Mr. Harris’s visit to the Metropolis on this occasion had been undertaken at the request of Mr. Whitfield. When the latter returned from America in March, 1741, he found that the

turn events had taken in connection with the Calvinistic Controversy, together with his now more pronounced views upon the subject, rendered co-operation with Mr. Wesley a matter of increasing difficulty. Shut out from many of the Church of England pulpits, Whitfield and Wesley were in a sense upon common ground; but they had adopted a policy of mutual exclusion as well. Mr. Wesley, who had withdrawn from the Moravians in Fetter Lane, on account of their extravagance, had commenced preaching at the Foundry, and Mr. Whitfield had set up for himself in a tabernacle or large wooden structure in Moorfields, which was opened in the month of June.

The partisans of Whitfield were neither few nor insignificant. Amongst them, though not of the most prominent, was one J. Lewis, of Bartholomew Close, who undertook on his own responsibility the printing of a small newspaper, the first of Methodist publications, and entitled "The Weekly History; or, an Account of the most Remarkable Particulars relating to the present progress of the Gospel." Mr. Harris was one of the principal contributors to this periodical, and from a train of circumstances we are led to believe that to his zeal in the higher interests of the Revival the idea of starting it was originally due. Mr. Lewis, the publisher, was himself a Welshman, being a native of Radnorshire, and from the first time he saw Harris his attachment towards him was stronger than towards all the others both in public and private. He frequently consulted with him in his difficulties, and in one of his letters he gratefully acknowledges the assistance he received from Harris in the conduct of his paper, in the form of that necessary commodity the love of which is the root of all evil.

It is the opinion of the historian of Welsh Methodism that Harris united in himself the distinguishing merits of both his great English contemporaries. He possessed the oratorical fervour of Whitfield, united to the organising faculty that

characterized Wesley; and as the latter quality was now in requisition, Mr. Whitfield had recourse to Harris's aid. "I was this summer, 1741," he writes, "desired to go to London to assist in the gathering a society at the Tabernacle near Moorfields, which was now building." He had not been there long before Whitfield departed on a preaching excursion to Scotland, and Harris was left in sole charge,—a situation that was no doubt exceedingly trying, but which with his wonted affection and dread of all strife he successfully availed himself of for the purpose of bringing about a better understanding. He made the cause of the estrangement between his friends a subject for special prayer, and in an interview with Mr. Wesley he so toned down the differences, that he was able to communicate the happy result to Mr. Whitfield in the following terms :—

"Oct., 1741.

"Dear brother Whitfield,

"I believe that jealousies will not be entirely eradicated until correspondence with those that indulge a party spirit, and are not like little children, ceases. I saw more than ever since I came home what carnal professors are. The Lord has helped me to bear my testimony against sin, and to declare that all those that labour for deliverance from the dominion of sin, self, and unbelief, shall be set free. They shall so behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ as to be changed into his image from glory to glory. 2 Cor. iii. 18; Rom. vi. 14; viii. 2; 2 Peter i. 4; 2 Cor. v. 15. When I mentioned this liberty from the power of sin by Christ as a King, as well as liberty from the guilt of it by Him as a Priest, I was abused as one holding sinless perfection. I find they have troubled your soul with this information. I have always stated that the body of sin remains in believers, but that the power of it is destroyed. We know that perfect love casteth out fear, and that we are then walking in the light of His countenance,—our joy is made full, and we are going from

conquering to conquer. We shall find by dwelling on sanctification, self and carnal reason in arms against us, just the same as the pride of the Pharisee is when we preach justification by faith. These opposers would be glad to influence you. They were in hopes to set brother Cennick and myself by the ears, but the Lord disappointed them.

“Now as to brother Wesley : the Lord gave me on a certain day such earnestness to pray for him, and such faith to believe that he would be led into all truth, that all prejudices were removed, and I could speak to him in love ; but still had no thoughts of so doing until he invited me to him, and then I opened my heart to him, and told him how the Lord taught me every truth,—that I had no freewill until six years and a half ago. He allowed everything, and said that we, through grace, shall not fall away. I saw room to hope that the Lord would bring us together in the truth. As to freewill he utterly denied it. He does really mean what he says. He did so openly in Charles’ Square. ‘God,’ said he, ‘is willing to save you all, if you will. What I mean by saying *if you will* is, not if you have a faint wish to go to heaven, but, if you will submit to Christ in all His offices for salvation,—if you are willing He should save you from sin as well as hell, else you cannot be saved.’

“Brother Charles Wesley came to town last Saturday night, and we providentially met ; he owned he had no freewill until four years ago,—that it was God who chose him first, and not he God, and that he is kept faithful by the faithfulness of God. He spoke tenderly of you, and seemed to be quite loving and teachable.”

Mr. Whitfield, who was of a sensitive and peace-loving disposition, was immediately moved by the intelligence he had received, and wrote at once to Mr. Wesley to express his satisfaction.

“Aberdeen, Oct. 10, 1741.*

“Reverend and dear Brother,

“This morning I received a letter from brother Harris, telling me how he had conversed with you and your dear brother. May God remove all obstacles that now prevent our union! Though I hold particular election, yet I offer Jesus freely to every individual soul. You may carry sanctification to what degrees you will, only I cannot agree with you that the in-being of sin is to be destroyed in this life. In about three weeks I hope to be at Bristol. May all disputings cease, and each of us talk of nothing but Jesus and Him crucified! This is my resolution.

“I am, without dissimulation,

“Ever yours,

“G. WHITFIELD.”

Five days after the date of Whitfield's letter, that is, Oct. 15, 1741, Harris and Wesley met according to engagement at New Passage in Monmouthshire. There were several others present. Wesley describes the meeting thus:—“We rode afterwards to *St. Bride's* in the Moors, where Mr. Rowlands preached again. Here we were met by Mr. Humphreys, and Thomas Bissicks, of Kingswood. About eleven a few of us retired in order to provoke one another to love and to good works. But T. Bissicks immediately introduced the dispute, and others seconded him. This Harris and Rowlands strongly withstood; but finding it profited nothing, Rowlands soon withdrew. Harris kept them at bay until about one o'clock in the morning. Going the next day to a neighbouring house, I found Mr. Humphreys and T. Bissicks tearing open the sore with all their might. When Harris heard of what had passed he hastened to stand in the gap once more, and with tears besought them all to follow after the things that made for peace. And God blessed the healing words which he spake,

* Tyerman's "Wesley," vol. i., p. 349.

so that we parted in much love, being all determined to let controversy alone and to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Harris and Wesley abounded in love towards each other; and the latter was greatly impressed by Harris's affectionate and melting manner of discussing the doctrines at issue.

During this same month of October, 1741, they met again at Bristol. "I found him," writes Wesley, "with Mr. Humphreys and Mr. S——. They immediately entered upon their favourite subject; on which when we had disputed two hours, and were just where we were at first, I begged that we might exchange controversy for prayer. We did so, and then parted in much love."

On the following day Mr. Wesley writes again:—"Howell Harris came to me at the New Room. He said that as to the decree of reprobation, he denounced and utterly abhorred it. And as to not falling from grace, he believed that it ought not to be mentioned to the unjustified, or to any that were slack and careless, much less to those that lived in sin; but only to the earnest and disconsolate mourners. He did himself believe it was possible for one to fall away who had been enlightened with some knowledge of God, who had tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made a partaker of the Holy Ghost, and wished we could all agree to keep as close as possible in controverted points to the very words of Holy Writ. He said that he accounted no man so justified as not to fall, until he had a thorough abiding hatred to all sin, and a continual hunger and thirst after all righteousness. Blessed be thou of the Lord, thou man of peace! Still follow after peace and holiness."

Shortly after the meeting with Mr. Wesley at Bristol, Harris goes on with the work in his own country. "On Friday night, Oct. 22," he writes, "I prayed and preached in Buckland Hall before many gentlemen and ladies, and Sir John Price, of Newtown Hall, Montgomeryshire. On the Saturday

at Mrs. Aubrey's for about three hours to many ladies, when the Lord helped me to bear a faithful testimony. Sunday I discoursed at Talgarth in the street, where we had amazing power. The minister read the Riot Act."

The event of being treated as a common disturber by the Rev. Pryce Davies, his own spiritual father, was not calculated to add to Harris's peace of mind ; but he was in no degree disturbed, for he preached again that evening at Trevecca, and after settling about a school, wrote the following deeply introspective and ingenuous letter to the Rev. John Wesley:—

"Trevecca, Oct. 24, 1741.

"Dear brother Wesley,

"My Lord has brought me to my native country again. I find that He owns some preachers in an especial manner to publish the glad tidings,—giving them an amazing power. But it did not suit old nature very well. Although I had prayed to the Lord to use any means to humble me, yea, if it should please Him to take my gifts and power, and give them to others, so that I might see His work carried on any way, I found my carnal heart rebelling, until I had help to look to Jesus my Physician, and then I was set free.

"I was also delivered from another sense of bondage, arising from self, that I felt striving in me on hearing of the uneasiness occasioned by some of our Baptist friends, who, by printing and preaching against Infant Baptism, were drawing some of our people over to them. When I found that my heart did rise against them, I considered that if they were actuated by bigotry, it might be the same thing that moved me against them. But the Blood of Jesus Christ that justified me before God has a cleansing virtue, so that from His wounds soon flowed love, tenderness, and pity to them, and to souls likely to be hurt by such proceedings. I, however, found the Lord was much with me, as usual, blessing the Word.

"O when will the time come that we shall agree. Till then may the Lord enable us to bear with one another. We must

before we can be united be truly simple, made really humble and open to conviction, willing to give up any expression that is not Scriptural, dead to our own names and characters, and sweetly inclined towards each other,—every one confessing what has been amiss in our speech and conduct towards each other. Otherwise Satan, through the remainder of self in us, will rend us further assunder from each other. Every one will seek the name of having drawn the other over, implying that the other was wrong; which evil if not seen, mourned over, and subdued by the Blood of Christ, will make us stiff, and apt to justify ourselves, but not to yield in the least to each other.

“ You heard of the letter I wrote to the Society in London. I stated how near we agree in meaning, though not in expression. Blessed be our Lord, that gives us to talk together without passion! May He give us more and more of His Spirit. Then we shall bear more, and be more able to understand one another. I hope we have in some measure drunk of the same spirit, that we fight against the same enemies, and are under the same Crown and Kingdom. We travel the same narrow road, and love the same Jesus. We are clothed in the same glorious robe of Christ’s imputed righteousness, hunger after the same holiness, and mourn and wait for the same liberty. We are soon to be before the same throne, and employed in the same work of praise to all eternity. While then we are on the road, and meet with so many enemies, let us remember our Lord’s last command, to love one another. And if we really carry on the same cause, let us not weaken one another’s hands. I know of no reason why I am thus brought to interfere between my Lord’s dear servants, but because there is in me less qualification than in others for such a work. But when the Lord speaks through an ass, it is the more clearly seen and known that it is of Him.”

In the same strain did Harris use to write to others. “ We want nothing towards union,” he would say, “ but to wait the

Lord going before us, and not be in a hurry ; to be truly humble, and willing to own and confess our faults to each other ; to love each other sincerely, to bear with one another and be patient ; not to misconstrue each other's meaning, but to ask what is meant by any expression objected to. We should further aim to glorify God in this matter, and submit the whole to Him ; and open our whole hearts and experiences to each other that we may know one another. I see plainly that we have our various messages. One is sent to proclaim in a more special manner this truth, and another to preach that truth, and another to sustain another office. Though differently engaged, we shall be fully taught and led into all truth ; we shall not then materially differ in expressions."

The reader is possibly by this time in fair possession of the state of the controversy respecting the doctrines of predestination and sinless perfection ; and if a yearning for harmony, and a passionate desire to see all differences merged in those great themes upon which there was an undoubted agreement, has a title to regard, the claims of Harris in this respect are paramount. He hated all disputation ; and apart from the fact that his intellect was by no means of a controversial bend, and his heart in no degree embittered, he dreaded all strife as likely to divert attention from the higher aspects of the work of God which it was the passion of his soul to carry forward. An extract from a letter dated Builth, Tuesday Evening, Oct. 26, 1741, reveals once again the over-taxed condition of his physical frame in the prosecution of his work. "I had," he says, "such sweet symptoms of a body spent that I was in hopes I was near home—on the borders of glory."

The last expression will furnish an index to the maturity of Harris's Christian experience. He lived in sight of the heavenly land. God and the spiritual world were present to his mind. The expression, however, is only a fragment, and the fuller revelation of the depth of his piety can only be seen from a further perusal of his purely experimental epistles.

Those epistles were thrown off with marvellous profusion in the midst of a life of extremest hurry, and for the most part between the dead of midnight and the dawn of morning; but they were a mere fraction of his literary activity, as may be learned from the fact that his journals, now extant at Trevecca, occupy about seventeen thousand pages of manuscript, which, however, are written so closely as to render them practically illegible. This extreme hurry, together with the fact that many of Harris's letters were transcribed by illiterate copyists, may account for the adverse opinion of Mr. Bulmer * with regard to his grammatical accuracy and the unity and precision of his style; but it accounts as well, in conjunction of course with the intense eagerness and spirituality of Harris's mind, for that flowing and exalted strain which made the late Rev. Dr. James Hamilton place the productions of Harris on a parallel with those of the dignified and saintly Rutherford.† The following letters already published are literally in the words of the manuscript.

"To Mrs. S——.

"Nov. 12, 1741.

"Dear Mrs. S——

"O how does the humble and poor soul thrive? Do you feel you are united to Christ? And does the life that is in Him flow to your dear soul? Are you hungering and thirsting for this, and continually longing for His abiding presence with you? Dear sister, bear with me; it is out of godly jealousy I entreat you to see narrowly whether there be no idols in your heart, nearer than Christ. I beg of God to search you, lest after much seeking you may not find because you did not seek with all your heart. Before there can be a complete marriage between Him and our souls, there must be an eternal separation made between us and not only the gaiety, and pride, and pomp, and outward conformity to, and pleas-

* *Memoirs of Howell Harris, Esq.*, p. 82.

† "*Presbyterian Review*," January, 1842.

ures of this evil world, but also between us and the inward desire after the praise or good opinion of any one of our fellow creatures, or after any treasure or creature enjoyment,—yea, more than that, there must be a thorough separation between us and ourselves before we can be truly united to Him. We must come out of our own willing and reasoning to God ; we must cease living to that great idol—self, that we may live to Him who died for us. Self must be subdued, and Christ must be exalted and set up in our souls, or we cannot be saved. If we live after the flesh or after the desire and will of the flesh or nature, or if we carry on an interest contrary to or separate from our Lord's interest, we shall most certainly perish. We are declared to be married to Christ, for by faith Christ makes Himself and us one ; and if Christ and all His righteousness and graces are become ours, then it cannot be but all we have, and are, and can do, are His. We no longer look on ourselves or anything we have as our own, but the Lord's. His God is our God, and His Spirit is ours, and with Him all things become ours and are freely given to us. And on seeing this we cannot help surrendering our all to Him again, continually asking, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ? How shall I improve every talent I have to Thy glory ? O make me faithful, not that I may merit Thy love, but because Thou hast loved me freely, that I may also show my love to Thee, and that Thou shouldest be pleased to say that in this Thou art glorified, namely, in that I bear much fruit. And now if this be the real case with you, if you feel you cannot rest willingly till you enjoy the full fruition of God every moment ; if you are willing that Christ should do what He will with you, and shall take away every right eye from you ; if you are made willing to deny yourself and to take up your cross, daily bearing His reproach, then though you may be mourning, and in the dark and comfortless for a time, yet indeed our dear Lord will come and visit you, and will not leave you in distress, but will make His abode with you for

ever. And He will water you every moment ; for never did a kind mother love her own child with such care and tenderness as Christ loves His poor weak lambs ; and the weaker they are the more they are entitled to His care and tenderness ; the more they can cry, Lord, Thou knowest that I am the weakest and the blindest, the vilest and the most miserable of any, and therefore watch over poor me, nor leave me for a moment, lest I set up an idol in my heart, or deny Thee, or forget Thee, or grieve Thy Spirit. Take me all into Thy hands, for I cannot help myself. May this be the continual breathing of your soul ; and may you never rest till you feel the full power of Christ's Blood in your soul. This is the earnest prayer of him that longs to see you shine and grow in grace here, and in glory hereafter at God's right hand. And in order to effect this he is ready to rejoice in being used by your great Shepherd, as a poor instrument in His hand, whilst

“ HOWELL HARRIS.”

“ To — G.

“ Dec. 29, 1741.

“ Dear Sister,

“ I find the days of your mourning are not yet ended ; you are taught to wait all your appointed time, till your change cometh. He will come and will not long tarry ; and the lower He humbles us the higher He will raise us up again. Though all your early acquaintance and fellow-travellers should forget you, yet you have one Friend that never will, or can forget you. He is all tenderness, and compassion, and sympathy, everything in Him is wonderful. Fear not ; you will at last win the day, and Satan shall be bruised under your feet. Christ will reign till all His enemies are subdued. He is King in Zion, and all His enemies shall be scattered. What though there are giants in the land, we have a glorious Captain. Who dares stand before Him ? Stand your ground and let not go your shield. The trial of your faith is precious. Hope against hope, and give as little room as possible to

reasoning. The sooner you will flee as poor, blind, hard, dead, and lost, to Christ, the sooner you will find rest to your distressed soul. In Him is all your fruit found; and of His fulness we shall drink freely grace for or upon grace.

"I think it is not an easy matter to root the principle of the old covenant out of our hearts, and to go to Christ for faith and repentance, for growth and fruit, for faithfulness and power to keep these graces in exercise. When Christ calls us to obey, to believe, to repent, to grow, and to be faithful and fruitful, we are ready to look into ourselves, and to resolve to work these in ourselves; and so failing we fall to reasoning, and thence to unbelief. Our dear Lord will make us acknowledge His sovereignty, and humble our souls before Him, and see that we are saved by grace alone. That the Lord may keep you by His power through faith is the payer of

"Yours in Him,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

"To Marmaduke Gwynn, Esq.

"Feb., 1742.

"Dear Sir,—

"I perceive when the veil of darkness is but a little taken away from our eyes, we behold such glory and perfection shining in the face of Jesus Christ, that we cannot help loathing ourselves with Job under a sense of His favour, that we are taught to be so nearly related to Him. Heb. ii. 11—15. And then we cry, I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes see Thee, and, therefore, I abhor myself in dust and ashes. Job xlii. Who am I to be thus honoured? What! a child of the devil to be made a child of God! What! my heart that was a den of thieves and full of all uncleanness to be made a temple of the Holy Ghost! What! Is the eternal God, my Maker, become my Husband and Friend? What self-loathing, and love, and zeal will arise from such discoveries! What wisdom does the enlight-

ened soul see in the scheme of our salvation ! How precious is Christ to such a one ! How does he behold Him, full of grace and truth, the Pearl of great price, and willingly leaves all, and suffers all for Him, and counts all things but dung and dross that he may win Him. Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9. Then all the things of time that the blind world admires and follows after, appear in their own true light as toys and vanities not worth his notice ; and while he is by the mere letter-learned despised and pitied, and looked upon as an enthusiast and a fool, he, with heart-breaking pity, sees them in reality deceived and blinded by the god of this world, and running headlong to destruction.

“ A great many rest content with the candle as it were of letter-light in their hands, while others talk of Christ as their Saviour, who know Him only historically ; but the true believer knows Him experimentally ; he feels the power of His precious blood on his own soul, and can say He is altogether lovely, and that in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily. He says that here are true riches, that this is indeed the Pearl of great price, and consequently digs deep for it, and reckons his time lost but when it is directly or indirectly spent in viewing and setting forth the glory of this gift of God to a perishing world.

“ How sweet doth he feel it to speak of Him or speak to Him, and to do or suffer for Him ! None can know the sweetness and reality of this rest that is in Christ but such as feel sin to be a heavy burden, and labour hard to be freed from it. And when we are wounded, O how tender, safe, and glorious a physician we find Him to be ! When we see all our light darkness, then His light begins to shine within us. He that overcometh the pride, the unbelief, and unwillingness of his nature, and is made willing to become a fool for His sake, going to Him under a feeling sense of his own misery, seeing himself the chief of sinners deserving to be damned,—such a one shall find such sweetness in His love that he shall

never have an abiding relish or desire for creature delights or creature approbation. He dies to himself and to the world, its honours and praises, and out of his belly flows a well of water springing up to eternal life. He now lives a life hid with Christ in God,—a life hidden from the world,—and now has bread to eat which the world knows nothing of, the bread that comes down from above. John vi. 51. And being now risen with Christ, he sets his affections on things above and hath treasures in heaven, often feels himself a stranger and a pilgrim here waiting for the happy word that calls him home, desiring to live henceforth to no other end but to enjoy and glorify his God, feeling that the Son has made him free from the fear of hell or of finally falling away. He serves his God out of love for thus saving him, and when he feels himself weak through the flesh that is still in him (though it is crucified and has lost much power), yet he rejoices in the strength that is laid up in Christ, and counts it an honour to be enabled to suffer anything for the sake of the name of Jesus. He longs for more acquaintance and clearer fellowship with Him who is his all, who died that he might have life, whom by faith he sees a full propitiation for him, and who prepares a mansion for him above. John xiv. 2, 3; 1 John ii. 1, 2. Self is drawn or cast down in him, and Christ is set up; so that now he ceases from setting up his own interest or praise, seeking only or chiefly his Lord and Master's, who having sent His Spirit into his heart, doth make him cry Abba Father! and teaches him that which is hid from the wise and learned, and which the world by natural wisdom cannot know. 1 Cor. i. 21. This spirit applies the blood of Christ to his conscience, and shows God reconciled to him; and that melts him down to love, and godly sorrow that ever he should pierce the lovely Jesus, and makes him cry, Lord, what shall I do for Thy great name while I live to show my love to Thee? Now the soul feeling its relationship to Jesus Christ goes to Him, and humbly by faith lays claim to all His

merits, and all He has brought to sinners by His active and passive obedience, as his own. For as the wife by her marriage is entitled to her husband's estate, so each believer being united to Christ by a lively faith has earth and all in heaven to be his own. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. If through weakness he falls, though his heart break because he has offended his dear Lord who freely forgives him all, yet he cannot live in doubt, because the blood of Jesus Christ delivereth or cleanseth him from all sin. 1 John i. 7. He now feels what before he only read and had a notion of, and he can say, My beloved is mine and I am His. And so every new discovery of Christ's love transforms his spirit and nature more and more to His image. Then he begins to feel what is a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and then he feels it more easy to forgive injuries, to love enemies, to bear reproaches, to be despised and contradicted. So being used to the Cross, he is more and more perfected by sufferings, till after having suffered with Christ a little while, he is translated to be glorified with Him, to exchange reproach for glory, darkness for perfect light, seeing weakly as through a glass for the full fruition, having obtained the complete victory. He then wears the crown among those that came out of great tribulation, having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and there he waits for the accomplishing the number of the elect, when he shall make one among the heavenly choir when Christ will come to be glorified in His saints.

"I am, dear Sir, most humbly and affectionately,

"Yours in our dear Lord,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

"Feb. 11th, 1742.

"Dear Sister,—Surely you find Christ more and more sweet, kind, faithful, and tender daily. I hope you feel that He heals you according to your faith, and that He is more than conqueror over all your enemies. Though you seem

weak and unfaithful, you can yet oppose your powerful enemies, and triumph over them through your head Jesus Christ, crying, 'Ye tyrants, sin and Satan, Christ hath vanquished you both.' You shall soon tread on the adder and young lion. The days of your mourning shall soon be ended. He being your light, the sun will no longer give you light by day, nor the moon by night. We can never ask or expect things too great from our dear Lord. We never come poor, blind, and naked, to our dear Lord and Saviour, and go empty away; none are sent off so but the full, the whole, and the easy. Never was a friend so faithful and tender, nor a husband more sympathizing and watchful. O what valuable love is hid in these words, My God is your God, and My Father your Father! And with that love that the Father loved Me have I loved you! That was free, infinite, unconditional, eternal, unchangeable, and everlasting love! O for faith to lay hold of and to rely wholly on this Jesus. Amen.

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“To Mrs. G. P.

“Feb. 12th, 1742.

“Dear Sister,—By this time I hope you feel that Christ hath vanquished your enemies, and that Satan is more and more bruised under your feet. But if you don't feel it, yet reason not; you shall soon find he is a vanquished enemy. Wait Christ's way and time to carry on His own work in you, being under His hands as clay in the hands of the potter. Though you may now be dark, you shall yet see light in His light; and though you seem to yourself to be quite barren and dead, yet life is laid up in Christ for you, and so also is your fruit, and shall be communicated to you as He shall think fit. Our vessels are yet too carnal to bear much of the spiritual wine. He must have His own way to empty and humble us; and when we are truly broken, and made meek and lowly in heart, we shall find rest to our souls. And as we believe, we shall enter more and more into His rest;

therefore let us look earnestly into the matter, lest we fall short through unbelief. Be not discouraged if you seem to be more weak, blind, and helpless; it is only God's way of emptying us to make more room for Himself in our souls, and that He may be all in all; that we may no longer build on anything in ourselves or other creatures, but only on Him, the Rock of all ages. He is the Alpha and Omega; He begins, carries on, and finishes the work. Whom He once loves He loves to the end. Those that once truly eat His flesh and drink His blood shall never perish, but are passed from death unto life; and though they may fall, they shall never fall finally. O how sure is that New Covenant of free sovereign grace! He has undertaken all for you, and that to bring you home in spite of all opposition. Where He is, there shall you be soon. He has undertaken to make you meet for glory. He is preparing a place for you. He will be the finisher of the faith which He Himself is the author of. He is a shepherd that will not lose one of His sheep; and such a physician as never fails curing; and yet does all gratis. Go then, with all your sorrows through backsliding, to Him, and He will freely heal you though you have nothing but wounds. Isa. i. 6; v. 7, 17, 18. O come to Him, pray come, filthy as you are; and He will wash you and make you clean, and present you pure and spotless before the Father.

"In Him, I am yours,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

"Feb. 27, 1742.

"My dear, dear Mother,—

"I have sometimes sweet symptoms that my work is almost finished, and I feel that I am in a strait which to choose. Pity to the dear lambs constrains me on the one side, and the thought of leaving them is sore; but the fervent longing of my soul is to be dissolved, and to be for ever with my beloved Lord. My cry between the two is, Lord, do Thy will, whatever way it may be.

“ I hope, dear mother, you feel Christ is in you, going on from conquering to conquer, casting out the world and the things of time, working in you that mind and spirit that is in Him, and destroying in you the works of the devil. Do not be staggered if you feel sometimes some hidings of His face, some hardness and deadness, some strong onsets of Satan, some bitter remorse of mind, some sore wounds of conscience, some heavy trials. You must suffer in the same spirit as Christ did before you can be glorified with Him. If your trials are less from without, expect them sharper within. Faith is a grace given us to be tried and exercised; and so is every grace. Our hearts are ready to be careless and negligent unless exercised by trials. They are all tokens of God’s love to us, and being sanctified, send us nearer to God.

“ O, dear mother, my comfort as to you is that I hope our blessed Lord has loved you with an everlasting love. Beware of false comfort. Rather wait at Christ’s feet, and then the Comforter will soon come and will apply the merits of Christ. Eternity is at the door. Beware of grieving that blessed Spirit, without whom you cannot believe or repent. Be much in private; wait often on God; yield to the motions of His grace within you. Beware of anything that sets you in a hurry of mind. There is such loveliness, excellency, and suitableness for our wants in the Lord Jesus, that when we begin to know Him we cannot afterwards have an improper relish for any earthly things. When He, the Pearl of great price, is viewed as the only object of our supreme love, desire, and delight, we shall then find Him a rock that will keep us from sinking in storms and trials, a Friend that will never leave us nor forsake us, a Brother that loves with an unchangeable and everlasting love, a Husband that will sympathize with us in all our afflictions, a Shepherd that will carry us in His bosom while we are weak as lambs, a Physician that will heal all our wounds freely and tenderly, a Father that will feed us with the milk of His love by His word, and that beyond the love

of the kindest mother to her sucking child. Psalm lxxxix. Make sure then of Him. Count all things but loss and dung that you may win Him. And when you have known His love, light, and spirit, under a sense of your deserving eternal punishment, plead the privilege of being justified freely by His grace, and then you shall have rest in your soul.

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“Pembrokeshire, March 3, 1742.

“My very dear Mother,

“Think not that I undutifully forget you because I do not write to you oftener. My soul often wrestles for you. I trust that when your ashes mingle with the dust, I shall meet your soul among the glorified tribes in the realms above. I long to see you and to hear what our Lord has done for your soul since I saw you. I trust He is often spreading His heavenly wings over you, and feeding your hungry soul with the bread of life, and that He is bringing you nearer and nearer to Himself, showing you how dangerous it is to rest anywhere short of His merits,—His sacred wounds. O that I may hear that the Holy Spirit has breathed on this scrip and made it useful to warm your heart, to increase your faith, and hungering and desires after Him. O how should I wash my Lord’s feet with tears of gratitude and love if He in any wise employed me for the spiritual good of her precious soul that instrumentally gave me my being. You kindly watched over me and acted towards me as a most tender mother, when I might be justly ranked among the most undutiful of sons. But ever adored be God, who called us to such an honour as to have fellowship with Himself. It is delightful to my soul to see any walking with their faces Zion-ward; but it is unspeakably sweet to see my aged mother among them. Who knows but that my poor dear brothers may yet become willing to be counted fools for Christ’s sake. I trust I shall have time to write to them soon.

“The work of the Lord goes on indeed wonderfully everywhere. There is more power going on with the Word now than usual; there is a general revival everywhere; more come to hear the Gospel than ever before. The Lord continues to be exceedingly gracious to my soul, and leads me on by the still waters of comfort. He blesses my dear fellow-traveller much to me; words cannot express how happy we are. I was with brother Rowlands last Sunday, and there were such things in his ministry as I never saw, felt, or heard before anywhere. The power that attends the Word to the people there is inexpressible. I am in hopes of hearing brother Howell Davies to-morrow.

“I am, dear and honoured Mother,

“Your most dutiful son,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“Pembrokeshire, March 15, 1742.

“My very dear brother, Thomas Harris,

“It is now a long time since I saw you or wrote to you; but you are often on my thoughts and in my heart. Great hurry keeps me from writing to you. I was a night this week with Mr. Lloyd at Berllandywyll, Carmarthenshire, and sat up with him until past three o'clock in the morning. He was exceedingly kind, and spoke well of you.

“I have received a letter from brother Joseph, which I should have answered long ago had it not been for the continual hurry I am in. I love and honour you both most tenderly, and long to meet you in the realms above before the throne of Jesus, ever praising and adoring Him for saving poor sinners. My heart has often prayed earnestly for you; and tears of love to your souls have often watered and run down my poor cheeks. O what would I give to see you both savingly acquainted with the Friend of sinners,—the beloved Lamb of God through whose blood alone there is entrance to the regions of bliss. I believe you are not far from the king-

dom of God. Do you not often feel secret desires after God? Does not Jesus knock at the door of your heart? Do you not hear His voice? He would, did you but open to Him, come in and reveal all His glory to you. Do not for the Lord's sake—for your own soul's sake, resist the Holy Ghost, neither stifle His motions, but yield to them and obey."

"To Mrs. B (evan).

"March 26, 1742.

"How sweet and ravishing are the thoughts of death and eternity to the soul that hath heard the Shepherd's voice! His strength faileth not when ours doth. He watcheth over us even when we forget Him.

"He is our righteousness, in which we stand equally justified at all times, even in the eye of infinite justice. Though we in our obedience fall short of the glory of God, yet He accepts us, being complete in Christ. It is true we perceive millions of imperfections in all that we think, say, and do; but we appear before God, not what we are in ourselves, but what we are in Christ. The moment we flee to Him we become dead to the law as to any expectation of life by keeping it. And as the law cannot save us, so neither can it condemn us to eternal death, Christ having in our stead answered all its demands.

"But having found rest from the terrors of the law, through the life and death of Emmanuel, we have it written in our hearts, and we long for an entire conformity to its precepts, because in it we behold the image of our heavenly Father. We love holiness because God is holy, and hate sin because it is Satan's image, and contrary to the Divine nature. O what happiness to see Christ in all, and self nothing; to see God's eternal love in the Redeemer, and eternal life flowing to us freely from that fountain! This will enable us to bear more fruit to our dear Lord, and to be more useful in His church. True, we shall have more fellowship with Him, be

more assured of our interest in Him, and long for the moment when this mortal shall put on immortality. I hope the exclamation of your soul is, ‘What! hast thou, O eternal Jehovah, loved me thus! What me, vile me! What shall I do for Thee?’ When you seem weak, look out of yourself immediately unto Him who is your strength; when you commit sin, and see all you think and do to be sin, then do not reason with unbelief, but look immediately to Him that has no sin, who is become yours by grace,—else you will give the enemy an advantage over you. But as soon as you flee to Him then your peace shall be established, and your soul shall be swallowed up in deeper admiration of His free sovereign grace, who called you and made you to differ when there was no difference between you and those that are on the road to hell.

“Since our dear Lord empowers you to be a stewardess over a little portion of this earth, and as He hath given you a heart to use some portion of your wealth according to His will, and as His work calleth for such help in various ways, take heed how and where you give. You have need to pray not only that what you do may be with a single eye and out of love to Jesus, but also that you may be directed where to give much and where to give little; not only to lay out your property for God, but so as to bring most glory to Him. I give these general hints, that your charity may not be abused through the vigilance of a cunning enemy. Good of various kinds is going on, and calling for the assistance of God’s people according to their circumstances. Some worthy people who keep house are poor, fail to get work, and are near being in want. Some who are called to go about in the service of religion, often fail to do it as much as they would by reason of narrow circumstances. Some things ought to be printed. Schools are much wanted, and many talents, I believe, lie unimproved. Many who seem called to the ministry fail to have necessary instruction. Society rooms ought to be built or rented. May the Lord direct you how to give your mite according to His will.”

CHAPTER XIV.

A BREACH.

I N one of his letters upon the subject of controversy between Wesley and Whitfield, Harris speaks of his efforts at bringing the disputants together as an interference between the Lord's servants. Such a term applied by Harris to himself is an evidence of humility, but would be unwarrantable from any other source, as his timely and well meant interposition produced a remarkable effect. It failed to reconcile the views of the opponents, but it accomplished what was far more wonderful, it united their hearts; it preserved the unity of their spirits while allowing them to differ in doctrine and method. Their already expanded souls were still more enlarged by the fervour of Harris, until once again they touched and blended into one. "I spent an agreeable hour with Mr. Whitfield," writes Wesley, April 23, 1742; "I believe he is sincere in all he says concerning his earnest desire of joining hand in hand with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ. But if, as some would persuade me, he is not, the loss is all on his own side. I am just as I was. I go on my way whether he goes with me or stays behind."* Whitfield also writes the same year as follows: "Mr. Wesley, I think, is wrong in some things; but I believe he will shine bright in glory. I have not given way to him or to any I have thought in error; no, not for an hour; but I think it best not to dispute where there is no probability of convincing." Again Whitfield writes:—"I can heartily say Amen to the latter

* "Life of Wesley," by Tyerman, vol. i., p. 372.

part of your letter. Let the King live for ever and controversy die. It has died with me long ago. I thank you, dear sir, for praying for me. I have been on my knees praying for you and yours, and that nothing but love, lowliness, and simplicity may be among us."

It was impossible but that Harris, whose passionate longing for harmony prevented an irreparable alienation, and brought these great men back to something approaching the former friendship, should be an object of affection to both. Wesley indeed wrote to him, August 6, 1742, to express his attachment, and concludes his letter in the following words: "What need of this great gulf to be fixed between us? Brother, is thy heart with mine as my heart is with thine? If it be, give me thy hand. Let us rise up together against the evil-doers; let us not weaken but strengthen one another's hands in God. My brother, my soul is gone forth to meet thee; let us fall upon one another's neck. The good Lord blot out all that is past, and let there henceforth be peace between me and thee."* Equally cordial and complimentary was the conduct of the Rev. Charles Wesley towards Harris, when they met at Llantrissant in Glamorganshire. "In my discourse," he writes, "a gentleman who had come hither on purpose interrupted me, by desiring I would now speak to Mr. Harris, since I was sent for to disprove his errors. However, I quashed all further importunity by declaring 'I am unwilling to speak of brother Harris, because when I begin I know not when to leave off, and should say so much good of him that I fear some of you would not willingly hear it.'"[†]

The attachment of Mr. Whitfield to Harris was not a whit less hearty. It possessed, in fact, an element which could not fail to be lacking where sentiments differ, for they saw eye to eye and worked together upon the same lines. In the summer of 1742 Whitfield invites his friend to assist again at the

* Tyerman's "Wesley," vol. i., p. 375.

† "Memoirs of Harris," by Bulmer, pp. 75, 76.

Tabernacle. "I want to see you," he wrote, "face to face. I wish you would come to London immediately, and stay while I am in the country ; or rather go and preach in Bristol, Gloucester, and Wiltshire for about a fortnight, and then come up to London. Our congregations are large and solemn. I never had greater freedom in preaching. I am glad brother Rowlands is with you. Go on in the strength of our dear Lord, and you shall see Satan as lightning fall from heaven. May the Lord hide your precious soul under the shadow of His Almighty wings."

In complying with Mr. Whitfield's request to proceed to the Metropolis, Harris takes Bristol on his way, and passing on to Wiltshire he met Mr. Cennick, who, along with twenty-four other friends all on horseback, accompanied him to Swindon. As they were preaching at the Grove near this town, they were violently assaulted by a furious mob, who came among the people playing at the backsword, and discharging muddy water from buckets, and playing the fire-engine on Harris and Cennick. One of the by-standers made merry over the business by telling a butcher in the crowd to save all the blood he could, that they might pump it over the preacher and his congregation whenever one of them ventured to the place again. An attempt was also made to drown their voices by blowing horns, and firing guns over the heads of the people. One of the villains presented his fire-arm to Mr. Harris's forehead. "But," he says, "my soul was happy ; I could cheerfully stand as a mark for them. One of them struck me on the mouth, and brought some blood ; but God was pleased to endue us with uncommon patience, meekness, and great power to speak to the people, and many listened with much seriousness. We then walked up into the town, reasoning with those who opposed us, besmeared with mire, gunpowder, and muddy water thrown by the engine. We were followed by a large concourse of people ; and when we had washed ourselves and changed our clothes, we preached to them in the yard

belonging to the house where we were entertained. Mr. Cennick prayed and I preached, when I am persuaded some of them were convinced of sin. They begged us earnestly to go to a village about a mile distant, which we promised to do should the Lord permit. We went ; and in that village the Word of the Lord now runs and is glorified. Then I proceeded on my journey to London. It was very remarkable that we received no material hurt at Swindon ; though several bound themselves with oaths that we should not go away alive, and followed us above a quarter of a mile from the town,—yet they were not permitted to lay hold of us.”

Mr. Harris during his visit spent some months in London, and while he co-operated with Whitfield, he used to have frequent and cordial fellowship with Mr. Wesley as well. “I found,” he says, “on talking together deliberately, calmly, and lovingly, that the doctrinal difference between them was not so great as it seemed to be, and that they entirely agreed in the essential point of building the soul wholly on Christ, and giving God in Christ all the glory of our salvation. But the time of uniting is not yet come.”

While the large and loving heart of Harris thus longed for union between all the true servants of God, he was himself on the borders of a rupture with his friend and fellow-worker Mr. Edmund Jones, of Pontypool. Mr. Jones, in conjunction with others whom it may not be inappropriate to designate the Methodist Dissenters of the day in contradistinction to the Methodist clergy, used to assist Harris in the work of the revival, and under his direction had undertaken the oversight of the societies in certain parts in the unavoidable absence of their founder. But not satisfied with the impetus imparted to many a waning Dissenting interest by means of the revival, an impetus of so powerful a character that Dissent in its modern form and proportion in Wales is said to date from it,*

* “*Johnes on the Causes of Dissent in Wales*,” ch. i.

Mr. Jones exerted his influence over the societies of Harris, and succeeded in forming three or four of them into Independent churches. Mr. Harris was naturally grieved at the unfaithfulness of his friend; but the letter of remonstrance he wrote from Bristol, August 14, 1742, as he was on the way to London, breathes notwithstanding the highest form of Christian affection and courtesy. "I find," he says, "our sentiments differing so far about the ordering of the dear lambs, that we cannot have such outward agreement as we had; but I trust our dear Lord will help each of us to bear with one another. I am satisfied of you (and so have thought and said everywhere, as far as I can remember) that you do that which you consider to be God's will; and I trust that you think so of me. Though you may not think some steps I take to be right, yet I know you will not be angry with me; and if you should for a little while, you shall not be so long, for I trust we shall reign together to all eternity; and for what we now do wrong our dear Lord pities us, for each thinks he is following Him. Permit me humbly, and with all the love I have, which I find is real, to tell you, that for some reason I cannot agree with some steps you have taken. I do not say that you are wrong, but that after solid thoughts, earnest prayer, much weighing of things, and endeavouring to consider God's voice, I think that affair at Devynock, that motion near Neath, and that in Wiltshire, were not right. Oh do not be angry—rather throw the letter away. I write humbly and truly loving, with all the respect due to a minister of Christ and a child of God; and in whatever I have misbehaved towards you, pray for me and forgive me. I would not willingly follow myself. It has been often in my mind to write to you or to see you, but I feared my own spirit, lest I should not treat you or deliver my mind in the spirit of our Lord. I chose leaving it to the Lord. Now you have got the better of me in writing to me first, and may I be enabled to send you my thoughts humbly, meekly, and lovingly.

First,—as to the division in Devynock, I thought the thing in itself was not right ; that the reasons for it would not in judgment answer the objections against it, and that evil consequences were likely to follow it to us and to the ungodly ;—1st, to us, to weaken our hands by establishing enemies, and prejudice honest minds from coming to hear us by being now fixed in what was surmised of us from the beginning, that we went about to make a party, which I had from my heart in sincerity continually denied, for I never had that view ; 2nd, to fortify enemies with reasons against us, to persecute us, and prove us hypocrites, self-seeking, and Dissenters in the church, and so provide and supply them with fresh arguments to dissuade the ignorant from coming to hear us ; 3rd, this concerns us the more, as the work is but beginning ; 4th, this being the way in which the Lord called us, and began to come among us and bless us, I cannot sufficiently see that He intends to bring in any change.

“ As to the manner of effecting it, you know it was such as gave us a just cause of offence ; as you did not send to Mr. Griffith Jones, Mr. Rowlands, or myself, that we might have weighed, reasoned calmly, and spent some time in prayer together about it ; as it was the first step of this kind in Wales, and as most of the people had been called through our ministry, I know, if you will put yourself in our place, that you will see it was not quite right, any more than it would be for me if I was to come and take your people secretly from you, though they sent for me.

“ As to that at Neath, I could not see the call clear for our friends to go and make a new sect, and leave the church entirely. It cannot be proved that Thomas is a Deist, and if he were, as to his doctrine, it would not hurt any of us, for none go to hear him, at least to my knowledge, but only to receive the ordinance from him. I bore a public testimony against his doctrine, as they all know, I believe, one Sunday as soon as I came out of the church, in the highway near the

churchyard: and further, there is another minister of our church who preaches orthodox doctrine near there, and receives them to his communion. As to the preaching of the Word, they can go to hear it everywhere they meet the Lord, and are pressed to it. Had the Lord taken away His Spirit from the ordinance, that would call them from thence too; but till then I cannot see that verse, 1 Cor. v. 11, to be so clear at all as a prohibition to eat the spiritual bread with the profane or unregenerate, as to counterbalance other texts and reasons that make for it. Our Saviour and His disciples joined in worship and partook of the ordinances with persons of that character. The tares will always grow with the wheat, and the foolish virgins will be among the wise. That it is our burden that it is so, you may well feel in your own soul; but it is not yet made clear to me that every particular person in our day, in order to redress it, may go further than we have gone without being guilty of breaking peace, and of creating divisions, which cannot be fully made clear to me are for Christ's sake. Many things are now my burdens among all sects, which, were I set in a place of authority, I would endeavour to reform; but in the position I occupy, I humbly think I am only called to mourn in secret and publicly over what I see erroneous in principles and practice among all sects. As to the hearing of the Word, I direct all with humble earnestness to attend—(1) where the Gospel is most purely preached; (2) where their hearts are most preached to; (3) where they find the Lord most powerfully working on their souls; (4) where they are most pressed on, led on, fed, kept from drowsiness, and urged to grow up more and more to a conformity with God, and out of self and the spirit of the world. As to the ordinance, I advise all for peace' sake to abide to the utmost where they are, whether in church or meeting; and when they are fully assured that God calls them to separate, and that they are not led in any respect by self or Satan, then to take the gospel rule of love, and follow the Lord."

The Christian and catholic spirit of the foregoing letter seems to have had no effect in checking the proselytizing tendencies of Mr. Edmund Jones. In less than a year from the time it was written, that is, July 13, 1743, Mr. Harris complains to his friend Whitfield that he continued the practice even in the neighbourhood of Harris's home. "Mr. Edmund Jones," he writes, "has set up that meeting-house we spoke of at Trevecca. Two of our brethren joined, and more I suppose will; but I believe they will see it is not quite right."* It is needless to point out that the persistence of Mr. Jones in making sectarian capital of the revival rendered further intimacy and co-operation impracticable; and hence we find that, with a few notable exceptions, as for instance, Mr. Henry Davies, Blaengwrach, who for years was a warm friend and admirer of Harris, the Dissenting ministers in a measure held aloof, while Harris clung more tenaciously yet to the church of his youth and choice, with whose awakened clergy he had at the first begun to associate.

The attachment of Harris to the Episcopal Church was the more conspicuous on account of the opposition he had to endure, and the spiteful efforts the authorities were making to drive the revivalists away from her communion. Writing to Harris in London, October 20, 1742, Mr. Daniel Rowlands informs him that persecution was increasing, and that some of the brethren had been excommunicated. He desires Mr. Harris at the same time to consult with his brethren in London as to what was best to be done; and then at the close of his letter he enters a mild protest against the frequent visits of his friend to the Metropolis. "Don't you hear," he asks, "don't you hear all the brethren in Wales crying out loudly, Help! help! help! help! Brother Harris, thou bold champion, where art thou? What, in London now in the day of battle! What, has not London champions enough to fight for her? Where are the great Wesleys, and Cennick? Must

* Trevecca MSS.

poor Wales afford assistance to England? Oh, poor Wales! it is thy ingratitude altogether that has been the cause of all this. Good Lord, pity poor Wales! Send our dear brother among us with Thy power, and in the fulness of Thy blessing, and let the devil tremble before him. Amen. Amen."

The protest of Rowlands must have been penned under some immediate need of Harris's assistance. It is couched in language too eulogistic to imply serious censure. Mr. Harris's visits to London were certainly frequent and sometimes long; but he lived much nearer the Metropolis than Rowlands, and carried on a much more extensive correspondence with the English Reformers; and besides having the attraction of near relatives, amongst whom were his two brothers, now becoming prosperous and wealthy, his freedom from pastoral care enabled him to devote much of his time to assisting at the Tabernacle, at which place of worship he was the leading figure in the absence of Whitfield. But even in London he could not forget his country and compatriots. The Welsh in the Metropolis at that period were in a spiritually degraded condition, and used to assemble on Sunday mornings for diversion and wickedness in the neighbourhood of Lambeth;* and as in Wales Harris delighted in scattering the forces of iniquity, so in London he sent the lightnings of his alarming message into the gatherings of the godless Welsh, and succeeded in getting their attention to the claims of religion. "I went hence," he writes in one part of his journal, "I went hence to Lambeth, where at three I discoursed to a great crowd of Welshmen on the words, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?'" His thoughts, however, would frequently turn towards his friends in the Principality, and more especially towards the societies. Even during the present visit, while Mr. Whitfield was putting pressure upon him to undertake evangelistic work in Georgia, America, he was equally urgent and more successful with his friend in inducing him to

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," iii. p. 435.

visit Wales, in order to assist at the federation of societies which Harris was now contemplating. As to his private correspondence during those visits to London, it was so regular and animating that even Rowlands said to him : " I bless you for your letters, they are like showers of rain to a dry land. Indeed, the Lord gave you the tongue of the learned. . . . Methinks I hear you enquiring after Carnarvonshire : Benjamin Thomas is there ; the people come by thousands to hear."

It argues an amount of affection and confidence on the part of Rowlands that he should wish to see his friend return to the Principality. This confidence was based on intimate knowledge of Harris's capability and practice, and will be justified to the reader by tracing the course of the latter for the next few weeks in his history. He leaves London for Wales on the 6th November, 1742, and as if his sojourn there had been a period of rest instead of one of unremitting toil, he plunges at once into astonishing activity. The historian of Welsh Methodism informs us that when Trevecca was the base of his operations, he would preach at Trecastle, a distance of twenty miles, and return to his home the same evening, many of his hearers having travelled to hear him equally far over the Eppynt Mountains, a distance which they would retrace with cheerfulness, and resume without fatigue their work of the following day, as if the recollection of what they had heard were draughts of spiritual wine. Sometimes also, after the hundreds had crossed the country to hear him, and the weather would turn out unpropitious, they would remain for hours beneath a drenching rain spell-bound by the charm of his fervour and voice. This, however, is a statement of general practice, and lacks the precision of the following dates :—November 29, 1742, that is about three weeks from the time of Harris's return to Wales, Mr. James Beaumont, who was now at Trevecca, writes to a brother in London, and amongst other things remarked : " I long to be swallowed

up in the love of Christ as you and brother Harris are.” “Dear brother Harris is weeping in private. I long to overtake him. He is upon the full stretch for God. The Lord has much blessed his word since he came into the country.” Five days later Mr. Thomas James, another of the exhorters, wrote to Mr. Whitfield from Builth and said : “ I believe the coming of brother Harris into Wales at this time was of God, and that He is teaching him that wisdom which is from above. Last Sunday he and brother Beaumont and many brethren and sisters were together in Radnorshire. He discoursed three times. Great was the power, love, peace, and solidity we did enjoy, as if we had been in the arms of our dear Lord. May the Lord direct all your consultations at your meeting the brethren in Wales.”

The journey to Radnorshire mentioned in the last extract was the beginning of an extended tour which Harris was now making through the counties of South Wales, rounding by the North of Cardiganshire. Writing to a friend on his journey he relates his experience thus :—

“ My dear, dear Brother,

“ Do not I hear you complaining, Brother Harris has forgotten me? But I am mistaken! The new creature makes an excuse; but soon we shall walk in perfect love, and abide in God; then we shall not forget each other at all; in the meantime let us pity each other. I see a glorious liberty before me, and for some little time I experienced what it is to be in it; and when self is destroyed and I am made as a little child, as clay in my Lord’s hands, I shall abide out of myself in God. In the meantime the cry of my soul is, O deliver me wholly from myself, and from my own will, from working or reasoning, from loving or trusting in, or obeying, or serving myself. And methinks I hear you say, And that is the language of my heart too. I can’t call myself happy or free indeed till I spiritually live, move, speak, look, and act in

God, delivered from myself and my own thoughts, and from all bondage and subjection to the creature by slavish fear. When I am near God I am near you at London."

The following letter, written when the present excursion was over, gives a summarized account of the whole, and shows the extent of his travels:—

"Trevecca, Dec. 25, 1742.

"My dear, dear Brother,

"I am just now returned home from my journey round a great part of South Wales. But where to begin to relate how the work of God is going on in most places is what I can't tell. There is a general revival everywhere among the ministers and people. Very many come under convictions in several places. Others are built up, and grow sweetly in love and fellowship together in God. There seems to be more solid faith and pure fire of love and zeal than I ever saw. In some places I am sure there were upwards of five thousand hearers at least. I believe our Lord is going to do a great work indeed.

"Last Sunday I heard that old and eminent man of God, Mr. Griffith Jones, who hath laboured with uncommon power and success in the ministry upwards of thirty years, I believe. In receiving the sacrament there then, I think I never had before such a discovery of my dear Master, who, notwithstanding all my provocations, continues to be far better and better to me every day. The evening before I had a sweet conference in private with the laborious Mr. Howell Davies, a young Church minister settled in Pembrokeshire, where there is much such another work going on as that in Scotland and America; and so it is in Cardiganshire by the ministry of dear Mr. Rowland, who grows amazingly indeed every day. With Mr. Jones was a young minister assisting at the ordinance, that seems under sweet convictions. And last night there was to hear me another curate, who, I trust, is savingly

touched by the grace of God. And though I travelled yesterday fifteen Welsh miles (which is generally my stage) and discoursed four times, and lost my sleep the night before, yet I was enabled to sit up with another young minister (Mr. Thomas Lewis, in this county, near Brecon), and sweet was the fellowship we had indeed in telling each other what the Lord had done for our souls, and how He brought us to the knowledge of His dear Son. This morning at five I heard a most glorious discourse from him indeed, praising our dear Immanuel.

“But 'tis not right to serve the table with so much meat without any sauce. When I came home I was welcomed with the news that our minister has actually turned out of communion some as came among us; with that my soul was solidly rejoicing in Christ, being assured that this should work for good. However, I went myself to him, and he said he did exclude us, and did forbid my coming there for reasons which he another time would give. And in his sermon he said, *Such as did not attend divine service in the parish churches were guilty of schism, and pierced Christ's sides as the soldiers did, etc., as did all that heard elsewhere.* The Lord was exceeding good to my soul; He kept me solid, sweet, tender, loving, and full of true pity to him and the people. I had great peace too, because I had not run before the Lord, and drawn this upon myself. I was glad to see the Lord pointing the way so clear, but am not fully determined what to do, till we shall find if this was done by consent of the Bishop—if so, let us expect a general exclusion from everywhere. All sects concur against us. May the Lord humble us, and give us to move on gently and with great fear, lest we run before the Lord.

“I have wrote as many letters as I had time, and would more, but for my extraordinary hurry; having travelled since this day seven weeks (the time I left London) near seven hundred computed miles, above a thousand measured, and discoursed about one hundred and twenty times, and often in

the open air (no house being able to contain the congregations) through great winds, rain, and frost, and yet I am not worse in body than when in London. 'Tis sweet to be on the full stretch for God. He is setting me more and more free from my own will and wisdom, righteousness, and workings, and reasons. And till I am utterly freed I am not happy. When I am in God no evil can come nigh me to hurt me, and when I am in His love and His glory, no temptation can allure me. I shall then fear Him, and Him alone; I shall love, trust in, seek to please, and admire Him alone, even in every individual look, word, and action, as in the greatest. Then we shall move even and sate when we are nothing, and God in Christ is all in all; when we are delivered from that something which we desired to be when we fell from God to self. Till then we shall not be free from evil surmisings of some or another of the family, nor glorifying our God in all, nor build up each other. When we cease from our own works and reason, we shall agree harmoniously in God, in Jesus, walking together in the same spirit, building together the temple of the Lord.

“I know you will pardon what you see of self or nature in poor, proud, and yet through free grace your happy, yea, very happy brother in Jesus,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

CHAPTER XV.

THE ASSOCIATION

WE have already had occasion to notice the foresight and watchfulness displayed by Harris and his contemporaries in forming the converts into societies, where each could participate in the interest and oversight of the others, and where each could contribute towards the welfare and advancement of all his fellow members.

It is an indication of the earnestness and industry of the founders of Welsh Methodism that in six years from the commencement of the movement the societies had increased to twenty within the limits of Breconshire, and to one hundred and forty in the whole of South Wales, with parts of Montgomeryshire and Merionethshire in the North. It is a further proof of the power of those men to imbue their converts with the same spirit as themselves, that in the same space of time as many as forty of those whom they had reclaimed had sprung up to assist in the character of exhorters.

For the greater part of those six years, that is, until the year 1740, the societies and exhorters were independent of each other, and had no bond of connection excepting their unity of spirit, the similarity of their views and work, and the equal dependence with which they all regarded their leaders, and Harris in particular, who as the founder of the movement and the principal instrument in their reclamation had drawn up rules for their conduct, and was looked up to as their chief and father, and obeyed in all that he chose to demand.

In the year last named it was thought desirable to seek a more tangible and a more permanent link of connection, by associating a few of the brethren together for mutual consultation and help, and accordingly they met once every two months or oftener, the principal business transacted being the examination of those who wished to become exhorters. This organization was far from being complete, as those monthly assemblies, it may be presumed, were comparatively local in their influence, and lacked the authority of a court that should speak with a constitutional voice in the name of every member in all the societies. The advantage of such a constitution would be that the work of the revival would be consolidated and perpetuated; schemes would be established for the united extension of religion; societies that would be gathered by the individual efforts of any of the members would have the advantage of incorporating with a powerful body, whereas the external union would afford the means not only of eliminating from the Connexion any influence or doctrine that was adverse to its spirit and progress, but of safeguarding the members against the insidious attacks of enemies outside.

When a definite movement was made for instituting such a plan the initiative was taken not by the eminent Daniel Rowlands, whose pastoral duties demanded his time in his own parish; nor by the Rev. W. Williams, who as yet was a curate of the Established Church; nor yet by the fervid but fragile Howell Davies, of Pembrokeshire, but by the strong and enthusiastic Howell Harris. It was he who organized the movement; his energy gave tone to the proceedings, and the influence of his powerful personality was an important factor in all the decisions arrived at.

To the many proofs of the catholicity of Harris's spirit may be added the broad terms on which, as we find from his correspondence with the Rev. Mr. Oulton, of Leominster,*

* MS. at Trevecca.

he proposed the constitution was to be founded. It was difficult in his opinion "for all to come to the same understanding with regard to texts about church government, and about the time and mode of baptism and some other little externals that are soon to perish ; and until they could come to require no other qualification for church membership than proofs of a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus, by a lively faith productive of holiness, and making itself visible by its growth," a union would be out of the question. "Were I called," Harris wrote, "to take care of a particular congregation, I should think it my duty to receive all to communion that I could find sufficient room to hope were born of God, though they could not agree with me in my judgment about some externals." The Rev. Mr. Oulton entertained the highest respect and affection for Harris, and was firmly of the opinion that the idea of uniting the societies into a collective whole was from God ; but he took exception to the undefined, or rather insufficient basis upon which it was proposed the organization should be founded, and in a long letter, dated March 27th, 1742, when as yet the matter was only simmering in Harris's mind, he was earnest with him to include at any rate baptism by immersion amongst his requirements, that being, according to Mr. Oulton, "no little external matter destined to perish, but an express ordinance and example from Christ and to last until the end of the world."

Towards the end of the year Mr. Oulton wrote to Harris again. "Yesterday," he said, "a neighbour who had been lately in Wales brought here a report of you, which I beg leave to mention, though I hope it is false, that you violently opposed some of your friends separating from the Church of England who thought it their duty to do so." He then went on to express a hope that in the proposed new departure in Wales Mr. Harris "would take his pattern or plan from Christ and his Apostles."

Amongst the correspondents of Harris at this period was the Rev. Mr. McCulloch, Cambuslang, the great instrument in the awakening that took place in Scotland, simultaneously with the revival in England and Wales. A letter to Mr. McCulloch, written when Harris was organizing his societies, is further evidence of the breadth of sympathy by which the Welsh Reformer was distinguished.

“Rev. and Dear Sir,

“Last week I had the favour of your letter, and nothing but extreme hurry could have kept me from answering it immediately. Did I not know that all the reason why the eternal God had in His sovereign grace favourable thoughts of me is because it so pleased Him, I should be at a loss to find out the reason why any of the King’s family should give me any room in their thoughts. But since it is so, it pleased the Father to love me in His dear Son, and cause His children to love and pity and pray for me; though I verily believe I am the vilest and most ungrateful of all His children. I will not reason about it, but will loathe myself and sink in the admiration of free grace and electing love.

“Now poor despised Wales is for three weeks favoured with the ministry of dear Mr. Whitfield. I believe he is sent there as well as to other places on a great message. Many of the polite folks come to hear, who are kept by prejudice from having the benefit of the labours of the other despised instruments of the Lord. There is great power attending the word. The work of the Lord is going on sweetly with us in very many places. Many are daily called, and others grow in a solid, holy acquaintance with Jesus Christ and themselves. And I hope the partition wall of bigotry is giving way in many hearts. May it all be destroyed, that no other temper may prevail in the Church, but pure universal love; and we, being dead to all names, will contend for nothing but who shall love the other most, and be in

reality the most ready to forgive, bear, and sympathize with each other, pitying what may be yet amiss in the one or the other; and be so inflamed with holy love to God and souls, that we may desire no other distinguishing name but that of a Christian. I am persuaded I am speaking the language of your soul, and that gives me liberty to vent my thoughts. I shall not however entertain you with the abominable scenes of wickedness I feel in my heart. And Oh, the continual readiness I find there to run from the best and kindest friend after sin of all sorts, self and creature, except as I am kept by His faithfulness.

“But you must bear with me to give you a hint that you may no longer rank me among the humble; for I am satisfied there is such a mystery of iniquity within me, and such a mixture of the beast and devil, as must make all that are acquainted with the depravity of our nature rank me among the worst of all the hellish crew. I wonder I am not in hell long ago. I see enough of myself to stagger others, and make those who have charity to think that a spark of truth may lie hid in such an abyss of hypocrisy and self-seeking cry, ‘Glory, glory, to all eternity, be to free grace and unconditional love.’ This is my song; and were I not persuaded that Christ had agreed to bring me home, and that he is greater than my heart, I should utterly despair of meeting you in glory.

“I have weighed the matter about giving an historical account of the late work of God here amongst us. I trust it is not from a false humility that I desire to be excused from granting your request. I hope our Lord will incline someone better qualified for the work, when He thinks fit. I believe a great work is begun, and we may humbly hope from what has come to light, that there are greater things to come. We have laboured here under many difficulties, which you in Scotland are strangers to—the bulk of the work being begun and carried on in the National Church, where you know it

was wanting. A great decay indeed prevails among all denominations; but I hope all real Christians of every name have in some measure helped each other. However, the generality of those in power are no friends to the work. They are as yet restrained from using their authority to hinder it, which inclines me to hope that there is mercy in store for some of them. And this makes us more cautious in every step we take, lest we should give offence so as to hinder us to win them to Christ. We cannot be expected to come to the order we could wish at once, but hope our Lord will gradually bring us to it. Then there will be a better opportunity to give a particular and methodical account of the whole. Many thousands, I believe, will at the last day bless God for the present out-pouring of the Spirit on Wales. I am sure you will pray for us. I believe there never were such poor, ignorant, unqualified young creatures used before of the Lord, and sent on such an errand; among the meanest of whom is—

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

All things being now pre-arranged, the first Conference of the Welsh Societies, or Association, as it was afterwards termed, was held at Watford, near Caerphilly, Glamorgan-shire, on the 5th and 6th January, 1743. Mr. Whitfield, who was in thorough sympathy with the movement, was present by special invitation, and was chosen Moderator. There were also present the following clergymen, viz.:—Revs. Daniel Rowlands, William Williams, and John Powell; and in addition the following laymen, viz.:—Howell Harris, Joseph Humphreys, John Cennick, Herbert Jenkins, James Beaumont, Thomas James, Morgan John Lewis, John Jones, Benjamin Thomas, and Thomas Lewis.

The result of the deliberations recorded by Harris in the “Trevecca Minutes” is related in the following terms:—“It then seemed to be the will of the Lord, by the united light of all the brethren, after humbly waiting upon Him, and debating the whole matter,—

“1. That Superintendents and Private Exhorters should be the order among the lay brethren.

“2. That Harris should inspect them all.

“3. That the Ordained Ministers should go about as far as they could.

“4. That the Superintendents should each have a certain district; and

“5. That the Private Exhorters should inspect only one or two societies, and follow their ordinary calling.”

It will be observed that the question of admitting laymen to take part in the public ministry of the Gospel has no place in the deliberations of this first Association at Watford. The question itself was excluded by the fact, that the movement owed its origin and success in so large a measure to one who was himself unordained. It was only necessary, therefore, that after general resolutions on the position and sphere of laymen had been passed, the particular laymen who were to occupy those positions should have the sanction of their brethren. Accordingly it was agreed,—

“1. That Jenkins, Beaumont, James, J. Lewis, B. Thomas, and J. Jones should be Public Exhorters (or Superintendents).

“2. That R. Tibbot be the general visitor of the Bands.

“3. That the following brethren (whose names were mentioned) be Private Exhorters.

“4. That those brethren who feel an objection to receive the communion in the Church on account of the ungodliness of the ministers and of the other communicants, and object likewise to communicate with Dissenters on account of their lukewarmness, be requested to continue to communicate in the Church until the Lord opens for them a clear way to leave its communion.

“5. That no Exhorter be received amongst us but such as are tried and approved of; and that no one shall go beyond his present limits without previous advice and consultation.

“6. That each Exhorter shall bring an account of his

respective societies to the next Association, which is to be on the first Wednesday after the 25th day of March, 1743.

“The Lord was pleased to be with the brethren, and seemingly to countenance their deliberations. *Gloria in excelsis Deo.*”

The Association was now a well-defined scheme, and nothing remained to make it a fact but the consent of the various District or County Associations that had been previously accustomed to meet. One of these County or Monthly Associations was about to be held at Llanddeusant, Carmarthenshire; and towards this place Mr. Harris repaired. But it was further necessary, in order to thorough consolidation, that each society should be visited; and as Mr. Harris had now received the authoritative appointment of General Inspector, he addressed himself to the business with his wonted courage. The task was certainly of immense magnitude; but as the members everywhere were already so melted by divine love that they were prepared to run into any mould, he experienced no difficulty from the societies themselves. In three weeks from the Watford Meeting he had scoured three counties, and finding himself again at the same place, he sends Mr. Whitfield the following account of his labours:—

“Waterford, Jan. 25th, 1743.

“My dear and elder Brother,

“Last night I had yours; and how has my dear Lord blessed it to me! My soul indeed blesses and loves my dear Jesus for His tenderness to you, and for going to do greater and greater things for you, and for making my letter to give you any pleasure. How should I love Him that He works in me, so that I can feel it wrought in me, that because He loves and knows you, I do so too. Indeed you are dear to me in and for Jesus’ sake. I have seen more of the wisdom of God in this His work than ever. What ways He chooses to lead us on to unite us, to empty us of ourselves, to teach us, and fit each for his work! As soon as we were in the least

capable of a little discipline and order He brings us together. Oh 'tis sweet to see the work all His own, and be able to see where He places us in it, and to give it all up to Him.

"I have seen and settled most of the societies in Brecknockshire, Monmouthshire, and Glamorganshire; and everywhere the Lord was remarkably with us, teaching and feeding us in each society. We have settled stewards and visitors, and some to feed them with the sincere milk of the word, and to watch over them, and bring us their account of them. At first we must expect trials and matters of bearing and forbearing, as you observed. But I believe the beginning is right; and as self and nature shall be more and more crucified, the spirit of love and order will bring us all, to a more still, solid, and humble walking together as becometh saints. I trust against next Assembly, to have seen and settled at least most of the societies, if not all, everywhere. To-morrow I shall begin my way towards Brother Rowlands, who, with the rest of the brethren that way, to-morrow se'n-night are to meet in Carmarthenshire; and so I shall settle the lambs that way. In several places many have come under convictions; and here and in St. Nicholas many are added to us lately.

"I am, most tenderly yours, in Jesus,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

Passing on from Waterford Mr. Harris pursues his journey to the extreme west of the County. The incidents on the way, and the readiness he found in the societies to incorporate, are recorded in a letter written to Mr. Whitfield, in London, a week after the previous one. It runs thus:—

"Swanzy, a Seaport Town,

"In Glamorganshire.

"My dearest dearest Brother,

"How can I withhold my pen, when my soul is so nearly united to you? Why, I can't tell, but the Holy Spirit gives

me an uncommon union with you. I now did cast my eyes on one of your journals, and though I made three attempts to read it, I could not, but was drawn up to our dear Father in groans unutterable for you, blessing God for you, being assured He has something uncommon yet to do by you ; and even now my soul is so full that 'tis ready to burst. O that I could be honoured to wash your feet. But I am so vile and barren, I cumber the ground. I long to go to the silent grave and rest in Jesus. I am sure God is going to do great things among us. I wrote to you last week, and still I have more and more good news. The time seems to be come for our towns to receive the Gospel. I have discoursed in Cardiff Gaol to a great auditory last week ; and some of the gentry that opposed Brother Wesley, heard quietly, and attentively, and seriously indeed ; and the society received me tenderly. There is an open door for you there.

“Friday evening I discoursed at Neath, a seaport town, where I never discoursed before ; and the thronging multitude received the word seriously and affectionately greedy, without any disturbance. I discoursed there again the next day, both times in the open street.

“Yesterday I discoursed just by this town to about two thousand ; most were very serious, and many wept sore. I had a call to the town to-day. Some of the better sort heard and were somewhat affected. In the morning I discoursed at a burial, before the corpse went out ; and heard one of the best sermons I ever heard as to sound doctrine, on, ‘If any man be in Christ he is a new creature,’ by a Church minister, one Mr. P—ce, of Llangyfelach Church. I afterwards dined with him, and we had very savoury discourse. I am called to another seaport town near here as soon as I can come, where I never was before. And such accounts I never heard of before from Brother Rowlands, of the power now with him, and the place almost rent by the power and presence of God, many so cut and wounded

that they are obliged to carry them out, there being so much weeping among the people,—and also himself so weeping (which was not usual with him) as is enough to melt a heart of stone. Such news I hear likewise from Pembroke-shire. And last night I talked with one who heard old Mr. Griffith Jones; and he said with what uncommon power, light, and life, he preached too, showing how forgiving love must flow naturally out of our souls like a river.

“I have seen and settled some societies since my last; and the Lord inclines the dear lambs to enter into fellowship sweetly everywhere. ’Tis easy to do the outward work when the Spirit of God has united the hearts. I am led mostly everywhere to discourse on Poverty of Spirit; and to search and cut self-righteousness, the secret bane of Christianity, and the chief root of all our sins. To-night I hope to settle three societies more; and then to meet dear Brother Rowlands, and the rest of the brethren. I am wonderfully helped in my body, and grow happier and happier in my soul, notwithstanding this nature that never ceases from sin. This morning I discoursed to an affected auditory near this town; and at noon in the town to a great congregation, and all were serious and affected. My tenderest respects to all the dear lambs. You know that I am yours for ever in Jesus.

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

The foregoing letter fixes the time of Harris’s first preaching in the town of Neath. He had been in the surrounding districts and in the outskirts earlier, but had never discoursed before in the town itself. A characteristic incident is mentioned in connection with one of his visits to the place. He was there on a market day, and dining at an inn where many farmers and others sat with him at the table. Not knowing who he was, they interlarded their conversation with profanity, and so provoked his zeal that he stood up and

made such a bold and unexpected attack on their behaviour as to cause some of them to drop their knives and forks from sheer alarm.*

Pressing on from Swansea, where the last letter was penned, he meets his brother Rowlands at the house of Jeffrey David, in Llanddeusant, Carmarthenshire. Here the Monthly Association was now held, Feb. 2, 1743. Mr. Rowlands writes of it as being "most heavenly."

It was here, at Llanddeusant, and at the house of Jeffrey David, in 1743, that one John Thomas was converted under Mr. Harris's preaching. Young Thomas was then a lad thirteen years of age. "When I came to the place," he afterwards wrote, "Mr. Harris at once won my affection. At times I thought his face had a glow like the shining of an angel. He preached the law terribly. Amongst other things he spoke to this effect:—'You may have turned much of the leaves of your Bible for the last forty years, and yet know no more of God than one of your dogs or swine; you may have bent on your knees many times and thought you were doing it nobly, but from the heart thou hast never yet once prayed; and unless God gets thy heart the devil will rend thee body and soul.' " Mr. Harris's preaching at this time was in the transition between the awful denunciations that characterized his early ministry and the probing into the sincerity of professors that marked him afterwards. But still his words were severe, and he seemed conscious of it, for he added, "my arrows are sharp, but may God direct them into thy heart." The petition was granted. One of the shafts pierced the soul of John Thomas. After this he was in the service of Mr. Griffith Jones. In 1747, he went and remained for twelve months at Trevecca, where he was educated, and maintained partly at Mr. Harris's expense. He here acquired the rudiments of Latin, and a sufficiency of other knowledge to enable him to become a schoolmaster and

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 51.

a Methodist exhorter; in 1761, he went to complete his education at the Nonconformist Academy, at Abergavenny, and six years later was ordained by Edmund Jones and others, thus adding one more to the many who swelled the ranks of the Dissenting ministry from the converts of the Great Revival. He writes gratefully of the year he spent at Trevecca in 1747.*

We have no account of the Llanddeusant Monthly Association from the pen of Howell Harris; but he still pursues his round, and still writes in the same jubilant strain. Feb. 13, 1743, in a letter to Mr. Whitfield, he says,—“The work goes on more and more sweetly everywhere. I trust we shall have good order. The exhorters show a very tractable spirit, each observes his place, and we have sweet harmony and love, and the lambs are taken better care of than ever. Great power attends the ministers and exhorters in their several places. Much does the Lord bless brother Herbert Jenkins. I saw him this week on his return from Pembroke-shire, Glamorgan, and Carmarthenshire. He is universally owned and liked; and unless his call be exceedingly clear to Wiltshire, I do not think he should go, except it were occasionally, especially as brother Adams is coming on so sweetly. But brethren Beaumont, T. James, Jenkins, and myself, may perhaps alternately visit our English brethren if we are called for and see that our Saviour blesses us there.

“I have been able to visit the societies in every place where I have been since I left you; and my dear Lord favours me with continual employment every day, and gives me strength in my body. He favours me in some places with His presence in a very wonderful manner; our hearts are inflamed, and our souls much drawn out by a spirit of supplication for all, especially for all the ministers; and He sometimes gives great freedom to pray for the Bishop and Clergy. Brother T. Lewis, a young clergyman, near Brecon,

* “Traethodydd,” 1868, p. 162.

comes on gloriously and powerfully, and has very sweet union with us. He will be a shining light indeed.

"The work in Cardiganshire is uncommon. I hope to be there in about a fortnight; I am now going towards Montgomery and Radnorshire. The first of March we are to have another Association near Llandovery, Carmarthenshire; from whence I hope to go to Pembrokeshire, and so to have settled all the Societies against our next meeting at Watford, where I trust our Lord will send you once more. My root and foundation is in God."

"Feb. 14th.—Since I wrote the above I saw brother W. Williams on his return from brother Rowlands. He informed me of the enemy's being set loose on them both, in discoursing near the sea-side in a part of Cardiganshire. There came a company of ruffians upon them, armed with guns and staves, and beat them unmercifully; but they escaped through the care of the Good Shepherd without much hurt; only brother Rowlands had one wound on his head. They were set on by a gentleman of the neighbourhood. But no wonder the enemy rages, where he sees his kingdom so set upon. Yesterday I heard brother Williams preach sweetly and powerfully indeed. The spirit of brother Rowlands seemed to rest in a great measure on him."

To the same effect, as descriptive of triumphant progress with the cause of God in Wales, is the following letter written by Harris, from a Monthly Association in Carmarthenshire, to his dearest brother Whitfield, March 1st, 1743:—

"I was last Sunday," he writes, "with brother Rowlands at the Ordinance, where I saw, heard, and felt such things as I cannot communicate an idea of on paper. The power that continues with him is uncommon; such crying, and heart-breaking groans, silent weeping, holy mourning, shouts of joy and rejoicings as I never witnessed before. Their 'Amens,' and crying 'Glory in the highest,' would have inflamed your dear soul had you been there. It is very common when he

preaches, for scores to fall down by the power of the word,—pierced and wounded by the love of God, and by a sight of the beauty and excellency of Jesus,—and lie down on the ground, nature being overcome by the sight and enjoyment of God given to their heaven-born souls so that they cannot bear any more,—the Spirit almost bursting the house of clay to go to its native home! Some lie there for hours; some praising and admiring Jesus Christ and free grace, others wanting words to utter their minds! You might read the language of a heart running over with love in their heavenly looks; their very eyes sparkling with love and joy and solid rest in God; others melting to sing when the preaching is over. And you might feel God among them as a flame, and they like Him. You might see others falling down on their knees one after another for a long time together, praying and interceding; you might see and feel that it is the prayer of faith, and that they are worshipping a God they know and love, and delight in, and that now scarcely a veil is between them and the Object of their adoration. Others lie wounded under a sense of their having pierced Jesus, so that they can hardly bear it. Others triumph over all their enemies, and some are mourning and waiting for the Comforter. Such love and sympathy a spiritual eye can see, and must acknowledge that God is there. However, this is but a very faint idea of it! For what words can express spiritual things? But methinks I see you bow the knee and say, ‘I can bear no more; I understand how it is.’ His congregation consist of, I believe, far above two thousand, whereof a great part is brought to glorious liberty, and walk soundly and firmly in clear light. Others are rejoicing in hope and expectation of a clearer manifestation of God’s glory, and the glorious liberty of his children. All the rest are seeking and mourning; and as the Spirit purges them inwardly, and unites them, they enter into outward order daily. All the rest, I believe, will gradually come on as the Spirit works on them; for one

cannot go on well with the outward order but as the soul is delivered from self-love, and all confusion, hurry, and reasoning. Many of them are scattered up and down the country; and being exceedingly poor they are in such worldly circumstances that they cannot come to that exact order and plan which you have in London. I see more and more daily that what is right and much to edification in one place among some people, is impracticable among others. In some of our private societies the Holy Spirit is uncommonly powerful indeed. We have left it to brother Rowlands to settle and unite them together in private bands, and we find the good effect of it. He provides some glorious souls to exhort and watch over them—some with more, and some with less power. But I know not of one that has been settled but has also been blessed, and we have reason to hope that they are where the great Head of the Church would have them to be.

“O, my brother, my heart is full, and I trust this will inflame your dear soul, and redound through the praises of many to God's glory. I am sure he is going to do a great work in poor Wales. Since I wrote to you I have been out every day, settling the dear lambs, and there is a revival everywhere. I believe you will be detained here by Jesus Christ a longer time than you think. There are eight counties open for you, and thirsting to hear you. Opposition ceases, so that I believe you will have many churches open, besides chapels; and some new houses for worship are building. Poor Wales! the High and Holy One has not forgotten thee.”

After penning the above letter, Harris proceeds to Pembrokeshire, pursuing his triumphant and even jubilant course in a manner which he shall again describe in his own words: “The kingdom of our Lord is coming on everywhere with great power,” he says, writing to his neighbour, Rev. T. Lewis, Breconshire, March 5, 1743. “It would rejoice your heaven-born soul indeed to see the poor souls flocking by

thousands to hear the delightful Gospel sound. And oh, such power as generally attends the labours of brother Rowlands in particular is indeed uncommon, and almost incredible until one sees it himself. Their singing and praying is indeed full of God. Oh, how did my soul burn with sacred love when I was among them! They fall almost as dead, by the power of the word, and continue weeping for joy having found the Messiah; some mourning under a sense of their vileness, and some in the pangs of the new birth. I am now in Pembrokeshire, where Rowlands has been preaching; he has been wonderfully attended with blessings in these borders also. The power at the conclusion of his sermons was such that multitudes continued weeping and crying out for the Saviour, and could not possibly forbear. O, my brother, my dear brother, I know this will warm your soul and make you bless God.

“I find that an uncommon power attends the labours of dear brother H. Davies also. I am in hopes of seeing and hearing him to-morrow. Such doors are opening everywhere! Oh! we had a most sweet meeting at Glanyrafon-ddu. Great was the love, power, and harmony that prevailed among us; and so it has been wherever I have preached—the Lord favours us with more or less of his presence. But did you know, dear brother, the hundredth part of my vileness, you would be surprised that I am permitted to breathe on God’s earth, much more that I am employed by Him. Surely I am well fitted to sound the praises of free grace.”

The Rev. Howell Davies, who was the great Methodist light and reformer of the county from which the above letter of Harris was written, corroborates the statement it contains in a letter to Cennick: “Rejoice evermore!” he began, “the kingdom of God is coming on with power. Last Sunday I preached at ‘Capel Evan’ to near four thousand people, and the word fell with such weight and power that many could scarcely support themselves under it. And as for

myself I hardly knew at times whether I was in or out of the body. Hosanna to the Son of David! In the afternoon I preached again, and then met the Society, and had the presence of God with us in a wonderful ravishing manner. The good wine was kept until the last. Hundreds were so filled with it that they broke forth with singing, and so continued for some hours; yea, many who lived some miles distant continued all night on their way home, and the echo of their praises might be heard almost over the country, and the air rang with their Hallelujahs. This will heighten your joys indeed. Pray mention it to dear brother Whitfield. I should be glad if you could make a tour among us before the next Association." Mr. Davies then concludes his letter with a tribute to the heroic sufferings and courage of the great leader of the work. "Dear brother Harris," he says, "has been sadly abused; but he conquers all before him by the sword of the Spirit."

It is needless to call special attention to the magnitude of the toil involved in the journey we have now traced, as the immensity of the labour involved is evident upon the surface.

It was encouraging amidst his incessant toil and suffering to be supported and cheered by friends; and such had now been raised up. Distinguished among them was his own convert Mr. Marmaduke Gwynne. This gentleman was concerned lest excess of zeal and the merciless manner in which Harris taxed his own resources should cause a premature break-down, and so deprive the work of one it could ill afford to spare.

Writing to him from his mansion at Garth, Breconshire, March 21, 1743, he expresses his joy at the progress of the gospel, mentions the steps he had taken for the protection of his Methodist friends in Cardiganshire, and then seeks to call Harris to mind the fact that his powers of labour and endurance were limited.

"The cruel usage," he says, "which our dear brother

Morgan Hughes met with from a Cardigan magistrate, must be a matter of grief to all the members of Christ who hear of it. I am also much concerned for the unkind behaviour of a near relative of mine to you, and for the abuse brother Rowlands received lately. It is necessary, as the divine law does not charm the carnal ear, to appeal to the human for redress against the transgressors of it. I received your letter, and wrote immediately to my nephew John Lloyd, of Peterwell, who is, I believe, the King's attorney of the Cardigan circuit, to desire him and his brother, who is a barrister, to be advocates for Morgan Hughes. I sent a copy of the commitment against him, and copies of your letters to Mr. Rowlands and myself. The Justice never consulted the statutes to ground his commitment upon: a good cause of action lies against him for false imprisonment. I told my nephew that if there was not some method found out to put a stop to such illegal proceedings of magistrates, I feared a heavy judgment would fall upon the nation. The glorious Captain of our salvation, when on earth, met with like treatment from the world; His soldiers expect no other. But satan and his agents, poor deluded slaves, can, as you observe, go no further than sovereign power permits, and that for some wise reasons. The prayers of the faithful in Jesus are heard, and Christ's Kingdom will come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. O Lord, hasten, if it is Thy will, that happy time, that Thy children may rejoice. I have enclosed my nephew John Lloyd's answer. I think Mr. Rowlands will do right to bring some witnesses with him to Cardigan Sessions, and to indict the persons who abused him when he was endeavouring to bring his hearers to a sense of their duty to God, their neighbours, and themselves.

“The influence of the glad tidings you bring to a benighted world, obliges those whose minds are renewed to put up their petitions to the Lord, that He would give you bodily

health for many years ; enabling you to do more good before you are removed by Him to glory. I find it was four o'clock in the morning when you wrote your letter to me. I am not surprised therefore at the weariness of your body. I fear your immoderate and unseasonable labours and watchings will hasten your dissolution. The thought grieves all the children of God that know you. If you do not forbear that practice, you will have cause to repent. You will not be displeased at this freedom from me, who am but a babe in the school of Christ, in thus remonstrating with you. By you, as God's instrument, I was much enlightened to see myself as the chief of sinners. I give glory to the triune God for bringing me out of self, and enabling me to see my wretched nakedness,—to be covered with my dear Saviour's robe of righteousness that I may appear in it before my heavenly Father, being made meet for the holy city."

Harris's excellent brother, Joseph, was equally solicitous concerning the state of his health: "I have always," he wrote, "had a sincere affection for you, and wish you would manage so as to preserve a little your constitution, already too much broken."

It is not to be wondered at that such unexampled vigils and labours should now and again call forth the dissuasives of his friends, and that even the powerful and active frame of Harris should once in a way be so overcome with exhaustion, as to be unable to respond to the impulses of his soul and the call of duty. At an Association, when he and Mr. Daniel Rowlands were present, the latter had roused himself betimes to attend an early meeting, and finding that Mr. Harris had not followed, intended to reprove him for his neglect. It may be certain that reproof between such men for so trifling an incident would be exceedingly mild, and, probably, playful ; but even such as it was it died away upon the lips of Mr. Rowlands, when at his return he found his friend still in bed with the tears rolling in drops one after another upon his face.

Enquiring the matter, he found that Harris had been dreaming. In his dream he had been preaching to ruined sinners on the brink of hell, and felt so much for their condition that he had been entreating them with all his might to return to God.*

The above incident, which may have the appearance of being an exception to the passion with which Harris pursued his work, is rather an evidence of that passion. He laboured summer and winter, day and night; and in the one instance in which he is found sleeping, even the repose which nature demanded is tinged and disturbed with the thoughts of his waking hours. He could not help being ardent and persevering—it was a part of his nature; and he indulged in toil to the point of avidity, taxing and spending himself to the glory of God and the salvation of souls, until the iron constitution seemed ready to burst from the pressure and strain to which it was subject. He was nevertheless thankful for the solicitude of his friends, and his answer to the exposition of Mr. Gwynne is contained in the following letter:—

“My very dear Sir,—

“Great is the union and fellowship I enjoy with you. It is with great humility I thank you for all your kind notice of such an unworthy creature as I am, especially for the affectionate advice for my health. I assure you I shall practise it for conscience' sake. For though by reason of the depraved body I carry about with me, by means of which I daily offend the kindest of Fathers, and most compassionate of Masters, and though in order that I may uninterruptedly see and enjoy Him, and incessantly praise and adore Him, I long to go home, yet I can assure you that I am very willing to take any course to strengthen frail nature, to lengthen my time here as our Master sees fit, especially on seeing the glorious prospect that now appears in the Church of Christ.

* Life of Harris, by Morgan, p. 62.

“I am persuaded it is the dawn of a glorious day, after a long night of thick darkness. Indeed there is a glorious work going on now, and I trust all the poor, sinful, unworthy worms that the great Master builder sees fit to employ, shall be more and more delivered from self and made useful. He will supply them with all wisdom and strength for His own name’s sake. The thought of this supports our souls under a sense of the greatness of the work, of the strength and vigilance of our enemies, and of all our blindness, weakness, and blunders! O! what an honour it is to be employed in any sense by the Majesty of the Great Jehovah, who spans the heavens and numbers the stars, whom the angels adore with veiled faces! To be a judge in any assize on life or death, or to be an ambassador of an earthly monarch, is of great moment; but what is this to that of being employed by the King of Kings, whose meanest followers are kings and priests unto God? Indeed sir, we are very dim sighted in spiritual things. Our spiritual senses are but little exercised yet. We do but begin to see that we do not see, and to know that all our knowledge in spiritual things is but ignorance! O, how deep are we fallen! What pity should we have for poor souls that are yet unawakened to any sense of their misery, but alas laugh at their own destruction! Every smile we see on their unconverted faces, as it proves the strong man armed has yet all things at peace in them, ought to affect or distress our hearts; and the more they talk, in their blindness, of pitying our weakness and sadness, the more we should mourn in secret places over their real madness in following sense, sin, and satan; they spend their time in hunting after vanities, and amuse themselves with fancies that God is such a one as themselves!—But where am I going? I wish my head were a fountain of waters or tears, to mourn over these.”

CHAPTER XVI.

INTERNAL ORDER.

I N the last chapter the prodigious labour of Harris in visiting nearly all the societies was recounted. The result of his visitation, united to the influence of the Monthly Associations that had been held in the meantime at Llanddeusant, and Glan-yr-afon-ddu in Carmarthenshire, Trevecca and Llanwrtyd in Breconshire, and Duffryn in Montgomeryshire, was that the members and societies were all prepared for the contemplated union, and everything made ready for the *second* General or Quarterly Association, which was again held at Watford, on the 6th of April, 1743, when Mr. Whitfield, who was present by special and repeated invitation from Harris, was again appointed permanent Moderator, Mr. Harris to be Moderator in his absence.* At this Association the Monthly Meetings were incorporated as constituents of the Association, and the constitution of the Calvinistic Methodist body was established as nearly as possibly on the lines on which it has been worked ever since. Several propositions that came up from the fore-mentioned Monthly Meetings were accepted; the brethren appointed to different spheres were named, together with the societies they were to superintend, and the private exhorters and stewards that were to assist. All the counties of South Wales, with Montgomeryshire, were divided into districts for these various officers. It was also agreed—"That the superintendents should have liberty to preach on their journeys;

* Weekly History, Vol. 3. No. 1,

that Harris should be superintendent over Wales, and go to England when called; that all persons who think they have a call to exhort should make application to one of the Monthly Associations, by which their gifts, graces, and call are to be closely examined, and if approved of, to have such a district as the Association may think fit, and that the *approbation* must be signified to the General Association; that the superintendents shall send an *account* of what God has done in their particular districts to London every month, directed to Mr. J. Simms, Charles Square, Hoxton, for the minister in the Tabernacle; * that the next General Quarterly Association shall be held at Trevecca, on the first Wednesday after Midsummer Day; that a secretary shall be chosen for every Monthly Meeting, who shall take down in a book the minutes of the proceedings; that there shall be a Monthly Association in each of the South Wales counties; that the Monthly Association shall consist of an ordained minister as a moderator, the superintendent of the district, and his assistants; that each Association shall begin and end with prayer; that all superintendents shall be present, not excepting the private exhorters; and that the private exhorters shall not, in their journeys, send their publications or notices of preaching to any place, but speak in any private house to the family and neighbours, if desired."

The Association was opened with prayer, and a powerful sermon by Rev. G. Whitfield on "Enoch walked with God." After this they betook themselves to business, which was carried on with great unity and love, the sitting of the first day continuing till two o'clock in the morning, and that of the second day till midnight, all acknowledging that God was with them, and eventually "parting with each other praising and blessing God for what He had done, and still expecting to see greater things."

In pursuance of the tenor of the foregoing resolutions, the

* For insertion in the "Weekly History."

country was divided into five districts, each district forming a Monthly Meeting or Association. The names of those districts with their moderators and superintendents are as follows:—

1. Radnor and Montgomery. Moderator, William Williams; superintendent, Richard Tibbot.

2. Carmarthenshire and part of Cardigan. Moderator, Daniel Rowlands; superintendents, John Richard, James Williams, William John, and David Williams.

3. Breconshire. Moderator, Thomas Lewis; superintendents, Thomas James and James Beaumont.

4. Pembrokeshire and the lower part of Cardigan. Moderator, Howell Davies; superintendents, William Richard, Thomas Meyler, and John Harris.

5. Monmouth and Glamorgan. Moderator, John Powell; superintendents, Morgan John, Thomas Williams, Morgan John Lewis, and Thomas Price, to whom was afterwards added John Belcher.

The Association being over, Mr. Harris proceeds on another preaching excursion through the counties of South Wales in company with Mr. Whitfield, both of them marching from place to place like commissioners deputed to take possession of a country already subdued. The account which Mr. Harris gives of the journey in a letter to Cennick from Haverfordwest, April 18, 1743, is as follows:—

“ My dearest, dearest brother,—

“ I am persuaded the Lord sent brother Whitfield for very great ends among us at this time. He preached two extraordinary sermons indeed with great power at our Society at Watford, one on walking with God, the other on the believer's rest. Last Saturday he preached at the Town-hall, Cardiff, when many that opposed brother W——y heard him very attentively, and were affected. That night he preached again at Aberddaw, in the Vale of Glamorgan, and stopped

at Fonmon Castle, where we had great sweetness ; and many that were prejudiced against him were softened and melted to love ; and more especially the next morning on hearing him preach at Penmark, from whence he set out for Llantrisant, where he preached with great power in the evening. Monday, having travelled twenty Welsh miles, discoursing on the way at Margam and Neath, we came to Swansea, where our Lord did wonderfully favour us with His presence indeed ; and I am persuaded it was a happy day to many souls. Among thousands of the hearers there were several of the politer sort, especially in the evening. He discoursed with such convincing power and argument that I trust many were reached. After having preached three times, twice in the town, and once in the country, we came to Llanelly, and were there kindly received by dear Mr. D —n, a gentleman and a Christian ; he is a member of Mr. G. Jones's congregation, an old disciple, having been, I believe, about thirty years in Christ. Brother Whitfield having preached there twice to a very large congregation, we went to a place near Kidwelly, where, as in every one of these places, I was obliged to discourse in Welsh, as many hundreds present were unacquainted with English. I did so at Carmarthen also, where, the following day, he preached twice to several thousands with somewhat of the same power as at Swansea. This was probably a great day here. Many persons of fashion heard the word with great seriousness, and many seemed affected ; several clergymen that attended were, I understand, much affected and pleased. He preached the next day at Laugharne, and Narberth in Pembrokeshire. Many of the gentry came to hear us in both places, and seemed everywhere to receive the word in love. Great is the power that goes with it everywhere. God seems to make all fall before the Gospel of his dear Son here. Brother Whitfield yesterday preached to, I believe, twelve thousand at Llys-y-fran, by one of brother H. Davies's churches, with most

convincing power indeed ; and I believe many met with God there. I preached in the evening to as great a congregation as in the morning ; and to-day he preached twice here, once in St. Martin's Church, and once in the churchyard. None but such as felt the same can tell how the arrows of the Lord fled through the congregation ; a lovely sight to see ladies weeping for their sins."

It will be seen from the foregoing reports of those early Associations, that every branch of the great work, from the smallest society and the most insignificant exhorter, was brought under the supervision of a central authority. The ultimate object was the consolidation and extension of the cause of God in the spirit and on the lines of the great revival that had been so auspiciously begun, and so successfully carried forward, as was unmistakably pointed out at an Association at Llangeitho, in August, 1744, when it was resolved, " That all should zealously stir up the people to a strict walk with God, and to bear fruit to his glory and honour."

It was this supreme end of getting the people from their sins, and teaching them a holier and happier method of existence, that moved Harris in the first place to start out upon his irregular evangelistic career ; it was this that moved him to gather his converts into societies, to group the societies of certain districts into Monthly Associations, and to unite these latter into the Quarterly Gathering that was henceforward to be the supreme legislative and administrative court for the whole denomination.

It was necessary above all things in a work of such magnitude, and so spiritual in its nature, that the men who were from time to time enlisted to assist in the character of public exhorters should be men of good standing. Their knowledge and abilities would be necessarily limited on account of the previous darkness and irreligion in which many of them had lived ; but once they had taken upon themselves a profession

of better things by joining the societies, and had come forward either of their own accord or at the representation of others, to promote the extension of the movement in an official capacity, they became amenable to public opinion, and exposed not only themselves but the cause in which they were engaged to public derision and scorn, should they prove to be unworthy of their trust.

There was no one more sensitive to the need of caution in this particular than Mr. Harris himself. Conscious of the irregularity of his own method, he was apprehensive lest men of unworthy motives should take occasion by his example, and hence it was that when he and his associates assumed the organized and authoritative direction of the affairs of the revival, such care was taken in the admission of their assistants, and such unhesitating straightforwardness in the rejection and the expulsion of the unworthy. In addition to the resolutions bearing upon this matter that have already been given, it was further enacted, that "When anyone offers himself as an exhorter, he must first of all exhort at the meetings of the church to which he belongs,—(1) That he may have the approbation of one or more experienced Christians who have often heard him; (2) To ascertain the opinions of three or four public or private exhorters and ministers respecting him, and then 'he must undergo a searching examination as to his grace, his calling, his qualifications, his gifts, and his doctrine.'"

These regulations are mentioned in evidence of the zealous care with which the reputation of the revival was guarded. The fathers of Methodism felt the need of caution, inasmuch as any slander brought upon the work from the glaring incompetency, or uncorrected misdeameanour of its advocates, would be the means of pulling down the reformation at a faster rate than the most devoted of its champions could build it up. The result of their guardedness was that the early Methodist exhorters were for the most part men of

genuine piety, while not a few of them were possessed of considerable scriptural knowledge, sound judgment, and deep religious experience. They were also sensible of the responsibility laid upon them in having the oversight of souls; and when they obtained the sanction of their brethren, and were located in their respective spheres, it was no sinecure to which they were appointed. In addition to their preaching engagements, each of them had twelve or fourteen societies to overlook, which, with some assistance from the *private* exhorters, they were to visit once every fortnight. They had also to attend the Monthly Associations of their county, and on some occasions to preside, and in all cases to bring with them a written report of the state of their societies, with the names of the members arranged according to sex, as male or female, and according to condition, as married, single, or widows, and with the exact spiritual status of each one faithfully described. The devotedness of these men in the discharge of their duties, and the skill they possessed in gauging the condition of souls, may be seen from the following reports, which are selected as specimens of their productions. The first was from the pen of John Harris, a young man twenty-two years of age, who at a Monthly Association held at Longhouse, June 8, 1743, was appointed to the oversight of a number of societies in Pembrokeshire. This John Harris became afterwards well-known throughout North and South Wales as a man approved of God, and was one of the most useful and popular men in his county. The character of the report evinces, that notwithstanding the tenderness of his years he was thoroughly in earnest. It runs in these terms:—"The love of our dear Immanuel at length constrains me to acquaint you how it has been with me since our last Monthly Meeting, when you gave me charge over the several societies here mentioned. When I was asked by you concerning my liberty I made answer as I was expected, but an immediate dread fell upon me as to how I, an infant in experience, could

presume to hold up the balance in which to weigh souls. And what a detriment if I should mislead them in their discernment between flesh and spirit—between love to God and love towards self. But the liberty which I professed in my answer to you became a bond constraining me to consider what I had taken in hand; and a terror fell upon my soul lest I should be unfaithful to Christ, a grief to my pastors, and a reproach to the ways and children of God. The burden was so intolerable that both soul and body were ready to sink beneath it. I was in an agony of mind for some time. I thought more of rendering my account to the Association, which was approaching, than I did of the Great Tribunal itself. I sent, however, to convene the societies in the appointed time and order, when I appeared amongst them as one in authority.

“On the 13th instant I met the flock of Prendergast and Usmaston, at Fenton, about 25 in number, when the windows of heaven were opened, and the dew of God’s love was showered upon us until we were inundated as in a mighty ocean. There was also given to me wisdom and knowledge and understanding and humility, and so much sympathy with the dear lambs that I could truthfully exclaim, ‘God is love.’ The flock seemed as bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; and we sang with one voice a new song.

“On the 14th I was at Llawhaden. The number was only 11, but my affection continued and increased. It was not enough that they should kneel in prayer—two of them fell upon their faces and were unwilling to arise. While I was setting before them the love of God they failed to remain in the room, but went out from one to one, prostrated themselves in the dust, and cried out, ‘Let the archangel Michael praise, for we are insufficient.’

“On the 15th at Jefferson. The Tower of Babel rocked and tottered to its fall, both in private and in public. The jubilant strains of free grace were in every mouth, and every heart was filled with love.

“On the 20th at Gelli-dawel. The number 15. From the commencement till now the blessed Lamb has not withdrawn His smiles from me ; but has comforted me as it were upon His knee. He has moreover filled me, and the flock as well, with love, and caused us to cry out, O ye purified spirits, do you adore and bless, for ye are delivered from the trammels of clay. Strike loftier strains till we are privileged to join you !

“In this manner, dear brethren, as I will call you, I was made partaker of your anxiety and care in the great work. And as I believe that our great High Priest assists you and is the Author of the work, I believe also that He will be its Finisher. Go on, therefore ; for indeed the Lamb of God has a hand in the work you are engaged in, and ye also shall reap of the fruit of your labours. This from the unworthiest of those who seek the face of the Lamb,

“JOHN HARRIS.”

Similar in spirit, though not so imaginative in expression, was James Williams, another of the superintendents within the jurisdiction of Mr. Daniel Rowlands. Writing to his Monthly Association he reports :—“Dear brethren in the Lord,—This is to inform you that a wide door has been opened unto me by the Almighty God in the societies named underneath, and what successful progress the Gospel makes among them. I verily believe that they excel every other part which is known to me in the Principality of Wales, in love to God and His Gospel, in their carefulness to walk according to its precepts, as well as in their unity with each other : not being persecuted or disturbed by any, excepting a little persecution that happened lately at Lampeter, in the county of Cardigan. While the members of the society were together singing psalms and praying to God, a Justice of the Peace, with his servants, came upon them to disturb them, and the man who was praying at the time was taken prisoner ; but through the providence of God the persecution has moder-

ated, and the prisoner has been set at liberty ; but the Justices continue their threatenings.

“Cayo society contains 60 members, 27 of whom enjoy liberty, the others are under the law.

“Tally society contains 68 members, 24 of whom have obtained deliverance through Christ, the others are under the law. William John, exhorter ; Thomas Griffiths, steward.

“Llangathen society contains 64 members, 59 of whom are free in Christ, and others under the law. Morris John, exhorter.

“Llanfynydd society contains 54 members, 23 of whom are free in Christ, and the others under the law. Morris John is exhorter here also.” And thus the report continues to the end of James Williams’s district.

There was one of those early superintendents whose name deserves to be mentioned on account of the part he took in the spread of the revival in North Wales. His name was Richard Tibbot. He had been born 1719, of remarkably pious parents, in the parish of Llanbrynmair ; was known to fear the Lord from childhood, and was received to communion at fifteen years of age, and commenced preaching at twenty, in connection with the Independent church that existed in the parish. In his youth he devoted himself with assiduity to the duties of religion and to the pursuit of knowledge, became acquainted with Latin and Greek, and had mastered the rudiments of Hebrew. In the year 1741 we find him under the tuition of the Rev. Griffith Jones at Llanddowror, and in 1743, having now identified himself with the Methodist movement, his worth is recognised by his appointment as general visitor of the bands, and subsequently, as we have seen, by his being constituted the superintendent of the district that comprised the counties of Radnor and Montgomery. His report of the churches in the latter county begins by saying that generally the work of God progresses favourably in the societies. “There are some of the professors,” he

says, "under conviction, and are frequently pained by temptations. Sometimes those trials are from without—from men; other times they come from within—from the fiery darts of Satan; and again, they proceed from the back-sliding of those who bring dishonour upon the ways of God, and cause offence to the lambs who would wish to persevere; and again, the temptations come from the wranglings of those who oppose. But whatever agency the devil employs, Christ carries the day, so that through the trial of their faith the lambs are purified and confirmed in the truth." He then goes on to relate more minutely the condition of the societies under his charge, in each case mentioning first the name of the society, and then giving particulars in relation to its state and numbers, of which the following is a specimen:—

"Llanfair society. Many come to hear, and some are under conviction, but as yet there is little order amongst them. They meet three or four times a week, and are very zealous—six or eight will pray before they get up from their knees. We have reason to believe that God has a work to do amongst them. David Powell and Evan Davies both much in love, and are exceedingly happy. But as for Edward Gittins, Morris Watkin, Thomas Davies, and Rhys Evans, they are rather dark, but are fervent in their desire; they are as yet but young soldiers knowing but little of themselves or of their spiritual foes."

The name of Richard Tibbot will occur incidentally once or twice again in the course of the present pages; but one or two facts in reference to his further history may be inserted here. When the Methodist movement extended in North Wales, the *superintendency* of Tibbot extended with it, and eventually embraced the counties of Merioneth, Carnarvon, and Denbigh. He visited the societies of those counties regularly every three months, endured his share of hardship and persecution and imprisonment, continued with the Methodists altogether nearly a quarter of a century, and in 1762,

when the Rev. Lewis Rees of Llanbrynmair removed to Glamorganshire, was induced to settle down as an Independent minister in his native parish, a position he occupied for thirty-five years, and then after continuing to associate on terms of affection and intimacy with his Methodist brethren to the end of his days, he passed away at a ripe and honoured age in the year 1798. He was a man of amiable disposition; firm as a rock when the essentials of religion were concerned, but unprejudiced and charitable when there was nothing at stake but the accidents of form and party.

It would be tedious to continue the subject of the superintendents' reports much further; but there is one specimen that must be given before they are dismissed. It is an instance in which the superintendents, eschewing classification, descend to particulars in reference to each individual member. It was sent in by Thomas James, who resided at Builth, in Breckonshire, and had seventeen societies under his care, eight of them containing altogether a hundred and thirty-four members, each one of whom is characterized in the following style: "Thomas Evans, enjoying much liberty; Evan Evans, has obtained a testimony, but weak in grace; Sarah Williams, justified, and coming out of the furnace; Sarah Jones, a full testimony, but in great bondage; Ann Baisdel, a sweet experience, but weak; Mary Bowen, seeking the Lord in earnest; Ann Lloyd, earnestly seeking through much tribulation."

It may be fairly presumed that the incessant visitation of the societies and districts, together with the preaching engagements of those early superintendents, demanded an amount of time and consecration that rendered the partial if not total withdrawal from secular employment an absolute necessity; and the question may naturally be asked as to the source, in the absence of independent means, whereby those excellent and devoted men obtained their support. It may furnish an answer as to the method by which it was *intended* they should

be supported, to insert an extract from the minutes of a Monthly Meeting held at Tycoedydd, May 25, 1743, at which Rowlands and Harris were present, and which runs to the following effect, "That there shall be a *box* in each society, under the care of one or two stewards, to receive weekly collection towards God's cause; and that each private exhorter shall keep a book containing the names of every one in the Society, and shall bring it to each quarterly Association, with the money that can be spared by mutual consent, for the public use."

The subsequent hardships that some of the public men of the movement passed through affords a presumption that the above resolution was not invariably carried out, and that in those cases where the box was established, the contributions were far from being adequate to the requirements. There was one of the superintendents, John Richard, by no means an unworthy man, who wrote to the Association to complain of his difficulties in this particular: "I have been," he says, "in great distress during the last quarter, so that I have not been able to visit the societies more than twice in the three months, in consequence of my own illness, and that of my wife, and so far I am in too straitened circumstances to be able to go about; and yet, through mercy, I am free in my spirit to go, if that will be to the glory of God. The Lord has not left me in want of anything since I threw myself into the arms of His providence. If he were to ask me now, 'Hast thou lacked anything'? I could answer with the disciples, 'Nothing, Lord.'"

In consequence of the complaint of the foregoing letter it was resolved:—"That brother John Richard go round in his district as heretofore, until the next Association; and that, in the meantime, Mr. Harris should visit the societies with the view to induce them to bear him fruit." A resolution of similar purpose was passed at Trevecca, October 18, 1744: "That the brethren earnestly exhort the people to walk

worthily, and *to bear fruit*, as there is a general complaint of deficiency in the matter."

Even the excellent Richard Tibbot was a sufferer in this respect, as it could not be otherwise when the smallness of the societies, and their poverty, and the fact that a large proportion of the converts were drawn from amongst the young, be borne in mind. The difficulties he experienced was a source of perplexity on more than one occasion. At an Association held at the house of Jeffrey Davies, in Llanddeusant, Carmarthenshire, exactly a month from the time that Tibbot was appointed, at Watford, to be general visitor of the district, it was resolved, "That he should keep a school in Pembrokeshire;" it was afterwards decided "that he should seek some employment until he could get a Welsh school;" April 18, 1744, it was passed, "That brother Richard Tibbot devote himself entirely to visiting all the societies in Montgomeryshire, once every week;" and then, in October of the same year, it was settled "that he should go to brother John Richard, to learn the trade of binding books." That he mastered the craft is improbable, as he settled soon after for the remainder of his life in North Wales, and left upon record a fragrant and undying name.

In the carrying out of all the regulations relating to the admission of exhorters, the fathers of Methodism were as particular as the limited nature of human penetration and foresight enabled them to be; and whenever a case occurred that demanded investigation, or censure, they allowed no consideration to stand in the way of the truth, or to tarnish the unsullied reputation they were anxious to maintain. Even the slightest insubordination was visited with summary judgment, and the delinquent had no manner of regaining his position but by submitting to the voice of authority. One of the superintendents, by name John Richard, had taken into his mind to write to the Association, objecting to the required classification of the members of the societies into married and

single as being a relic of popery ; maintaining also that it was unscriptural to register the members' names with the spiritual condition of each one appended, and that it was mistaken policy to confine the superintendents to specified districts instead of allowing them their freedom to follow what they considered to be the calling of God. The danger of insubordination of this kind spreading amongst the exhorters was apprehended to such a degree that Mr. Harris in Welsh, and Mr. Whitfield in English, had to reply to the objections, which they did with such effect that the offending brother was sorry for his disobedience, and restored to a proper spirit of submission. "I am grieved," he wrote back to the Association, "I am grieved that I withstood you so long ; but now, through grace, I know it is one of the greatest of privileges to meet together in conference in the interest of the Gospel ; and I believe that no one, excepting those who have experienced it, can rightly understand how deceitful the old serpent can be, as with me on the present occasion. I was so entirely in the devil's possession that I verily thought that all of you must give way to my opinion. But I certainly believe that the devil in this particular has imposed upon himself ; because, blessed be God, who can extract good from evil, I have been taught by him, as I am convinced, never again to imagine that my opinion is more enlightened than the united wisdom of all God's children."

The following resolutions, which were passed at various Monthly or Quarterly Associations during the first three or four years, are further illustrations of rigid adherence to settled regulations whenever the honour of religion demanded their enforcement. "That D. W. Rees should go and acknowledge what he had spoken amiss in discourse to Mr. G. Jones, before Mr. Davies ; and on their being reconciled be admitted again as an exhorter." "That Evan John's letter be answered by Mr. Williams, to the effect that we are not so persuaded of his calling to exhort as to give him the

right hand of fellowship." "Howell Griffith having been overtaken in a fault, but having manifested satisfactory evidence of repentance, it was agreed that he should be restored on trial, on condition that he henceforth avoid that which has been the occasion of his fall." "That brother Harris should, in the name of the assembled brethren, administer a reproof to John Williams for his negligence in watching over the society under his charge, and give him to understand that he shall be expelled after another month of trial, unless he show evidence of obedience and faithfulness." "That letters be written to Howell Davies and John Harris, because they have not sent their reasons for absenting themselves from the Associations; and that Thomas Meyler be written to because he neglects them altogether."

In the same spirit of conscientious discipline did the Association act in reference to heretical opinions. There was an exhorter of the name of William Rhys who had been charged with disseminating Antinomianism, and with maintaining not only that he had for some time been free from actual sin but that he was in all the faculties of his soul,—understanding, conscience, and will, entirely free from its taint. It was decided by the brethren, that inasmuch as he stubbornly clung to his views, he should be expelled; the societies warned of his heresy, and the brethren to avoid his company. "And thus," continues the report, "after long discussion and prayer, and with great solemnity, we turned him out; our hearts at the time being burdened with love to his soul, jealousy for the glory of God, and full of anxiety and alarm for the safety of the flock."

The organization that was thus set on foot, and which was originated mainly through the influence of Harris, may be spoken of as almost perfect in its nature. It availed itself of every species and degree of ability,—it gave liberty to the societies to extend the work in their several neighbourhoods,—and by the superincumbent weight of its number and

influence forced the denomination to spread out in those places where, hitherto, it had no footing, while at the same time it prevented the dissipation of its energy by centralizing its forces at the monthly and quarterly gatherings, where all its powers were represented in their strength and beauty.

The Institution, in the founding of which Harris was thus the prime mover, was carried on mainly by his inspiring genius and presence. His position as Moderator and Secretary invested him with authority, while his appointment as Superintendent over all Wales gave him a roving commission suited to the character he had voluntarily assumed, so that there was scarcely a feature of the work that did not come under his supervision. Like a general animating his forces, he flitted from place to place, and from one county to another, and from Wales to England, and from England back again to Wales, with incredible rapidity. He was familiar with every exhorter, on friendly terms with his clerical co-adjutors, and while the exigencies of parish work were a limit to the travelling propensities of the latter, Mr. Harris was free to go everywhere, and by the intrepidity of his demeanour, and the cheering ring of his voice, to put spirit into his brethren at societies, public meetings, and Monthly and Quarterly Associations throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Before dismissing the present subject, mention must be made of the Association founded by the Calvinistic Methodists of England. This latter never attained to the magnitude and importance of the Welsh assembly ; but it was conducted on the same lines, dealt with the same work, deliberated and legislated upon the same themes, and generally arrived at the same results. Mr. Harris, who was present at its founding in London in September, 1743, was soon the most prominent figure in their transactions, and was as urgently needed by his brethren in England as by his more immediate friends in Wales.*

* Life of Harris, by Morgan, Chap. ix ; also MSS. at Trevecca.

CHAPTER XVII.

RELATION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT

I N inducing and joining the early Welsh Methodists to establish the Association, Mr. Harris had no intention to separate from the Church of England. He was still faithful to that Church, notwithstanding the opposition he endured, and the reproach attaching to his conformity in the opinion of some of the disappointed Nonconformists of his day; and as the converts who joined the societies were expected to regard themselves as members of the Church of England, and the step he took in organising the societies into a body was for the purpose of better order and discipline, he hoped that eventually the spirit of the revival would permeate the entire fabric, and tinge from top to bottom the whole of the Welsh hierarchy. It is needless to remark that the mighty revival failed of the purpose Mr. Harris desired; but it became the means of impressing the mass of the Welsh people with religious fervour; and if the establishment, as such, held aloof in cold isolation, the fault is not chargeable to the reformer, as it was the hope of his heart and the aim of his life to bring about a general improvement in and by means of the Church itself.

“I still remained a member of the Church of England,” he writes, “though I am blamed for my conformity by people of all denominations; yet I cannot but rejoice on this account and of the good work that the Lord began *in* the Established Church; and I hope it is a leaven that will effectually operate.

I recommend the peaceable spirit that still remains in the Established Church, which tolerates such as differ from it, and does not quench this small effort of a revival in it. I look on this as a token for good to me; I find His presence always in the worship and ordinances, and have great freedom to wrestle in prayer for it, and a strong confidence that God would receive and revive this work in it. However, in this faith and persuasion only I can testify that I was called to abide in it, and not on account of any prejudice against any other party I abode in it to this day. Several were going to the Dissenters and other parties, and I thought it my duty to declare against them by laying the following reasons and scripture proofs before them: as the example of the prophets of old, and good men who abode in the Jewish Church, notwithstanding its degeneracy in every respect,—and our Saviour and his apostles attended service at the hour of prayer in the same church, though they knew that that church was to be abolished; nor did the Apostle exhort the sincere to forsake the Corinthian Church, notwithstanding the many irregularities therein. And our Saviour, after his ascension, did not advise his people in the seven churches of Asia to leave that church of which they were members, and go to another; no, but to reform that which was blameable, and to become the salt of others. So in regard to ourselves, though we are put poor, inconsiderable, and despicable members of his church, yet the Lord hath done great things in the nation by this revival, and he can make us the salt of this church and nation."

It was in the spirit of this last extract that Mr. Harris acted throughout. He dreaded above all things the appearance of wishing to serve a party, and avoided everything that could give colour to the imputation; and when his converts were reclaimed from sin he sought to dispose of them so that the country at large might receive the benefit of their renewed lives and example. On his second or third visit to

Carnarvonshire he found his converts of previous visits inclined to associate with the little Dissenting congregation at Pwllheli, and advised them to scatter and form themselves into small societies in their various neighbourhoods, observing that it was not well the salt should be all in the same bag.* It is an instance of the paramount weight of his authority that his counsel was unobtrusively carried out.

The influence of Harris, as well as of the Methodist clergy who co-operated with him, pervaded the whole of the Welsh Association; and at the founding of that assembly and for some time afterwards its nomenclature and transactions were all based on the principle of offending as little as possible the susceptibilities of Churchmen. The smaller communities of converts, for instance, were styled societies rather than churches; the officers who regulated their affairs were stewards rather than deacons; their spiritual directors were exhorters and superintendents rather than pastors and ministers; and the general union of all the societies was an Association rather than a Synod.

This attachment to the Establishment gave tone also to many of the resolutions that were passed. At a Monthly Association at Glan-yr-afon-ddu, April 17, 1744, the connection with the Church of England was under special consideration. There were some of the Methodists who had scruples as to the rightfulness of receiving the Communion from unworthy clergymen, and in company with unawakened communicants. The objection was borne down by several arguments, as for instance, that at the Sacrament the Christian should look to Christ rather than to the administrator; and it was agreed, after an expression of universal good will, "to communicate in the parish churches, and to advise the people to do so." At a Monthly Association held at Watford, September 27, 1744, Thomas Williams, a superintendent, was charged with slandering the clerical gown and cassock, and

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," vol. ii., p. 128.

narrowly escaped censure by explaining that his objection extended not "to those vestments in themselves, but only to the idolatrous veneration in which they were held." At an Association at Porthyrhyd, October 3, 1744, the desirability of erecting a place of worship at Llansawel was discussed. To call it a meeting-house would smack of dissent, to call it a chapel would clash with the Church; it was therefore agreed that the building to be erected should be a house for religious purposes.

A number of the most intelligent of the exhorters chafed under the restrictions placed upon them by the Church proclivities of the leaders. The resolutions that were passed at the Associations urged the expediency of each one communicating in his own parish church; but there was a decided preference amongst the converts for the Methodist clergy, whose piety was undoubted; and as the number of these was not sufficient to meet the needs of the ever-increasing members, the societies in many places were under considerable disadvantage. Repeated attention was called by the public exhorters to this deficiency, and the consequent injustice to the societies; and at last, impatient of the delay, five of the most prominent preachers of Glamorganshire, amongst whom was Mr. William Edwards, the celebrated architect, sent a memorial to the Association held at Caio, Carmarthenshire, in April 1745, praying the Association to redress their grievance, and qualify them by ordination for the administration of the Sacraments. The petition was couched in respectful but strong terms. "We have been waiting," they said, "for the last two years for your opinion upon this subject, and we see no token that you have weighed the matter as it ought to be weighed. We fear that you are too much under the influence of early training in connection therewith. We can perceive that if (some of) you were ordained to the Church of England, as you expect it would not pacify many of the brethren and sisters throughout the country, who feel the

need of pastors to administer the word and ordinances in their proper season.”*

This subject came up again at an Association held at Blaen-y-glyn, July 3, 1745. “Two letters were received, one from J. Richards, and the other from R. Tibbot, being under some difficulty how to act at the present time. They were apprehensive that they should be pressed for the army if they went to preach in some places they were in the habit of visiting before. They asked whether they should, in order to be safe, take a licence to preach. Most of us, therefore, thought that such as the enemy could not touch should go and preach in those dangerous places, and that others should go more privately, and use all simple wisdom, as this is only a trial for a time. But we agreed that if the persecution should become general, and the Gospel stopped, an appeal should be made to the Legislature, and if rejected, to the Bishops; and then, if our liberty be wholly taken from us, our way would be clear to a separation.”

It is evident from the closing words of the foregoing resolution that the idea of separating from the Establishment was not altogether foreign to their thoughts; but it must come as the result of the direct necessity, not from voluntary choice.

The dangers incidental to the uncanonical methods of the fathers had fallen, and were likely again to fall, with redoubled force upon the head of their great leader. It would be easy for Harris to obtain protection by declaring himself a Non-conformist, and sheltering under the provisions of the Toleration Act; but he was willing to forego that privilege from his contempt of danger on the one hand, and his ardent clinging to the Church on the other. To the depth of his heart he was a Churchman, and could not brook the thought of a breach. He regarded the members of the societies as belonging to the Establishment; and in a conversation which Thomas Williams, an exhorter, had with Rev. Thomas Morgan, a respectable

* *Methodistiaeth Cymru*,” vol. iii., p. 22.

Independent minister, and a convert of Harris, it was stated "that the Methodists had once all of them agreed to depart from the Church of England, excepting Mr. Howell Harris, who opposed their design with all his might."

Dr. Thomas Rees, to whom in his "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales"* we are indebted for the foregoing extract, goes a greater length still, and in order unnecessarily to magnify the difficulties under which Nonconformity has laboured, carries the church proclivities of Harris to the extent of making him blindly attached to the Establishment, and so inimical to Dissent that he attempted the wholesale conversion of Dissenters into Churchmen.† This, however, is a gratuitous assertion, and is directly opposed to the enlightened and self-sacrificing efforts by which Harris sought to reform the Church itself, as well as to the pronounced catholicity of his spirit and practice in reference to Dissenters. He sought in fact the conversion of none but sinners, and he went to those sinners to places where hitherto Dissenters as well as Churchmen had been content to leave them. In the prosecution of his task he cheerfully co-operated with all who proffered their aid, but sternly refused to foment opposition by making the revival the engine of a party. The influence he wielded was certainly the means of an unprecedented impulse to the ranks of Nonconformity; but the impetus obtained by the other denominations, as well as the existence of Calvinistic Methodism as a separate organization, has its apology in the exertions of a man who did his utmost to prevent secession, and lived and laboured only to serve the cause of religion. In fact the prevalence of Dissent in Wales is due to the piety and earnestness of a Churchman.

It would have been difficult to forecast the result even if all the converts had been of Harris's opinion, or were willing to be guided by his sole authority; but there were amongst them men who had been taught to form their own opinions,

* p. 367. † Ibid. 355.

and men who by the very intensity of their convictions had become alienated from a church whose ministers had proved negligent of their spiritual welfare, and whose lives were so indifferent that they found no sustenance in their ministrations, and could not think of receiving the sacred emblems at their hands. The societies likewise that had been formed, while they regarded themselves as a party in the Church, were under the necessity, in the majority of cases, of conducting their affairs with an amount of freedom and self-control, which in some instances was only tolerated by the sympathy of such of the clergy as were of their convictions, while in those neighbourhoods where the parish minister was hostile the very atmosphere of the Establishment was inimical and deadly. The preaching services and societies of the Methodists had therefore, in most cases, to be conducted and their whole transactions carried forward apart from the service of the Establishment, and, in the absence of chapels of their own, in such buildings as were placed at their disposal by members of their own persuasion. At first those meetings were under the exclusive authority of Howell Harris and such of the clergy as supported his views ; but when the members increased to such an extent that their management could only be carried forward by officers, such as stewards, exhorters, treasurers, and so on, chosen from amongst themselves, an amount of self-government was conferred which in the long run could only be appeased by isolated and absolute autonomy. It was therefore in the very nature of things a necessity that an organisation which affected to be known as a party in the Church, but which in reality was a separate body revolving around its original, should, in the absence of sufficient balancing force to assign to it the permanent position of a satellite, fly off to a distance and establish itself in the religious firmament as a luminary having a right to shine in virtue of its own inherent light. The final separation did not take place for many years after it had become an accomplished fact

amongst the Methodists of England; but the germ of the division, so long as the Episcopal Church refused to accommodate itself to the movement, was of the nature of Welsh Methodism, and when the Association was founded a step was taken that could only lead to one result, and that a final and irreparable secession.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WAR

HAVING violated the order of chronology for the purpose of rendering a more connected recital of the subject of the last two or three chapters, it is time we turn our attention more particularly to Harris. He continued to visit Monthly and Quarterly Associations, and to act as a spiritual father to the societies with their exhorters and superintendents. He continued also his open and terrific attacks upon the citadels of iniquity, visiting wakes and fairs and the resorts of all ungodliness, with the usual result that hell trembled. But while his mental and spiritual energy seemed unabated, his physical resources were mercilessly drawn upon, and the herculean frame was on the border of collapse. His correspondence about this time breathes frequent expressions of weariness, and often when he faced the crowds he depended for his support, as he informed Mr. Whitfield, upon supernatural strength.

In a letter he wrote to a friend in London, June 4, 1743, after mentioning that the work was a progressive work, and that it could not be expected that all uneven ways should at once be made smooth, nor the crooked paths of nature straight, nor the mountains of pride and self made low, he touches upon his growing infirmity in a way that presages the breakdown which eventually came, and that total retirement from public work which it will be our duty to recount. "It is now much upon me," he writes, "that I am called from the public to a more private work. My reasons I shall lay

before you ; I know you will lay them before the Lord and your praying believing acquaintance. First, God seems to lay this more on my heart than the other. Secondly, My nature is so worn out and spent and my body so impaired that I have not sufficient strength ; nor have I had for a long time but what I had by faith miraculously. Thirdly, My voice is habitually so taken away that indeed I cannot make a great auditory hear, at least not without uncommon pain. Fourthly, By a series of uncommon trials from all quarters, from men, from Satan, and from my own cursed nature, the Lord seems more immediately to be fitting me for inside work. Fifthly, He has poured public gifts of calling, convincing, and holding forth Christ to the unawakened on many of our brethren more than on me, and I believe they are more blessed in this work than I am. Sixthly, There seems to be a necessity for somebody for this work ; and 'tis work enough separate from the public. Seventhly, I could thereby have more time for reading, writing letters, and perhaps doing and receiving good in private. These reasons, especially my hoarseness and illness, make it impracticable for me to come to London unless some brother comes with me for the public work. I am now on my way towards Pembrokeshire to a Monthly Association."

He touches upon his intended visit to London again in a letter to John Cennick, which requires to be given in its entirety for its own sake, as will be increasingly the case with most of the letters that are to follow.

" July 19, 1743.

" My dearest and most highly favoured Brother,

" I received your kind letter a fortnight ago, or more. I can't well excuse myself for not answering it sooner, but I believe you will.

" Your gifts, graces, liberty, and success makes me love and praise the Dear Lamb on your account ; and indeed the

prayer of my inmost soul is, that you may yet more abound in all, and grow like the calves of the stall, and be the spiritual father of thousands. O may the good pleasure of the Lord prosper in your hands more and more. I am persuaded you sink deeper and deeper into God, out of self and corrupt nature, which is no other than the devil's image, and made up of enmity, darkness, and ingratitude, and carries in it everything that is odious and abominable in the sight of the Three in One.

“O my dear brother, I believe we do but begin to see what we are by nature, and what by grace. Every idle word we speak, every vain imagination, every moment's forgetfulness, and every foolish smile, and every look that is not full of God, proves yet an unmortified root of the old nature, and should still make us wash the Saviour's feet. Had we more true light we should be so affected with pity to our dear fellow-worms, and with grief in seeing the very sun and moon, earth and all creatures groaning together under their misery through our first fall, and in seeing so little awe and reverence in our own souls when at best when we approach so great and glorious a Majesty, that tears of godly sorrow would more frequently wash our guilty cheeks for our first departure from God in Adam. O dreadful sight! O black scene! to see us all with our faces against God, crying in our whole conduct, He is no God, and His laws no laws; my will is god, and my mind my law, and my light my guide. My dear brother, this is a melancholy sight, such as I am sure has often broken your tender heart.

“The work goes on sweetly with us; many grow daily, and fresh doors are opening, and many are convinced, called, and justified. Brother Whitfield told you of my coming up to London, but I am not quite clear yet. Pray send your mind on the receipt of this, and assure yourself that

“I am, for ever yours,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

The difficulties being removed that barred his way to the Metropolis, he proceeded thither once again. The innermost workings of his heart during his visit may be seen from the following letters, the first of which was written as a kind of pastoral to some of the societies in South Wales, and is, judging from its contents, an evidence, in addition to the many proofs already furnished, of his special fitness for that inner, more spiritual, and fatherly oversight to which he was now getting anxious to be exclusively devoted.

“London, August 27, 1743.

“My dear Fellow-Pilgrims,

“Nothing can give true happiness but constant enjoyment of Christ by faith. It is a good sign if you daily see more and more of your ignorance, blindness, and depravity, and long more after Christ. I would rather have a heart disposed to mourn over fallen man than to be able to speak as an angel.

“It is a common thing to pray for and converse about the work of the Spirit, having little or no apprehension at the same time of God and His greatness. Consequently there is no true humility, nor a watchful spirit, nor godly fear, nor a zealous desire for the glory of God. Then it is not to be wondered at if we do not improve in the use of the means of grace. We do not feed by faith on Christ, the Bread of life, in them; neither do we see Him through them. Alas! we are satisfied with a small impression of fervent love, not viewing the free eternal love of God in and through the blood of Christ.

“When we walk in the light of and near Jesus we see our own corruptions and sins so odious and dreadful, that we dare not mention the faults of others but to the Lord, weeping, or to themselves in love.

“We are not governed by the Spirit of God if the consideration of the graces, gifts, and liberty of others do not produce in us real joy and gratitude to God for them. And we do not

love souls as we should if a view of their sins, infirmities, and temptations excite no godly sorrow in us and grief on their account. We are very weak in graces if we do not consider it the greatest privilege to do something for Christ daily.

“We perceive how the wisdom of God has ordered all His creatures, the one as well as the other, in his own proper place ; and how He has given every one in the moral world his own gifts, his place, and proper situation, overruling every one as He pleases. They may not see Him, nor understand that they accomplish the great ends of His purpose ; they may not view His glory, but their own profit and honour, and shall consequently be punished by the Lord. How much more, then, do ye think, does He order in His infinite wisdom every one in his own place in his house and church, which is his bride and family !

“When the Spirit is pleased to bring us into this happy union, and when each sees his own proper place and work, and surrenders himself to the Lord to be qualified by Him, we shall increase daily in that blessed union ; and God himself will walk in the midst of us to feed and to lead us, and to change us more and more continually into His own image. In the meantime let us pray for each other, and watch against prejudice and evil-surmising, and everything that is likely to cool our love.”

Mr. Harris evidently carried out the spirit of the last exhortation, and casting prejudice and evil-surmisings aside, used, as he informs a friend in Wales in a letter dated Sept. 13, 1743, “every Lord's Day to receive the Sacrament with dear brother Wesley.”

The following letter was written to his great friend and fellow-worker the Rev. Daniel Rowlands. It touches incidentally upon the first Calvinistic Methodist Association in England, which was founded by the assistance of Harris during his present visit to the Metropolis.

“ London, Sept. 17th, 1743.

“ Dearest Brother Rowlands,

“ How does your warlike soul do? Methinks I see hell trembling and the enemy flying before you. Go on, bold champion, and fight the Lord's battle; and by the strength of God, according to the measure of faith and love, I will esteem it my privilege to strengteen your hands and to wash your feet.

“ A glorious work is going on in the world. The Lord is with His bold, successful Whitfield, and so He is with His persevering Wesley. Satan's kingdom shakes and falls before them. Many of the Moravians are greatly blessed in many provinces beyond the seas. We have had a sweet Association here; and we all agreed to continue as before in the Church, after some reasons were answered that some of the brethren had to the contrary. I received glorious news from Wales,—that the pleasure of the Lord prospers in your dear hands, which is no small refreshment for poor me.

“ I hear that brother Bloom is leaving us. I know that you are taught not to be moved at it. God has a voice in it; and if he is called to go to others to inflame them by his ministry I would rejoice; but if he should go to cool his zeal I should be concerned. Lord, thy will be done. The work is going on sweetly in this place, and I trust our dear Lord hath sent me here. Last week I was in a nobleman's house, whose lady is one of the sweetest souls I know. I dined the week before with Dr. Watts and Lady Abney. It would rejoice your heart to see the congregation, order, harmony, and sweetness that are here. Many grow daily in faith and holiness. I think I never saw the like of Mr. Whitfield in some things; such strong faith, brokenness of spirit, Catholic love, and true sympathy. Indeed, his tongue is like the pen of a ready writer to call sinners to Christ. And none are like brethren John and Charles Wesley to press after holiness. I see every day that each has his peculiar gifts and talents in

the work; and oh, that poor worthless I, since I cannot so much in a public way, may be every moment employed of my Lord to do somewhat as a servant to help you all. Indeed, this I esteem from my inmost soul an honour. I long to hear the Lord's voice through brother Rowlands. May the Lord give you gifts, graces, and success more and more daily; and may poor I be laid on your heart. I know of none more favoured than poor Cardiganshire. Wales is become more and more dear to me. Indeed, I love and honour God's messengers there. I am persuaded our order is of the Lord, and will stand. The exhorters are laid much on my heart; the Lord knows their weakness and ignorance, and pities them, and will teach, lead, and stand by them. It is sweet to see all graces and gifts for ourselves and others in Him. I indeed long to see you, and to tell you of the work of the Lord on my soul. Oh, the sweetness of the thought of spending eternity with you. I had a sweet letter from brother William John of Glan-cothy, and he gives me agreeable news of the Gospel in those parts, and how the Lord is gloriously with brother H. Davies. Surely we are born in golden days indeed. May we be animated more and more to be on the stretch after God, that the recollection of us when we are dead may preach and show forth the glory of the Lamb when our souls are joining the sacred orders above! Tell the friends they are dear to me. I hope to live and die, and live for ever with them. The thought of seeing you all is sweet."

The following letter, written to Mr. Whitfield from Wales, and dated Jan. 11, 1744,* furnishes a glowing account of the prosperity of the work in the Principality, and of the depth to which the converts were tinctured with the spirit of the revival.

"My very dear Brother Whitfield,

"I have been waiting just now on God for freedom to write to you. I think it is His will I should sit down to send you

* See "Life and Times of Howell Harris," by Morgan, p. 132.

some glorious news to refresh your precious soul. Glorious things have come to pass since you were here. Many souls are daily called. The labours of all our associates are more or less blessed. The Lord countenances the lay preachers much; but He is more abundantly with the ordained ministers. Our Quarterly Association was held on the third instant at Watford. Brother Rowlands preached a wonderful sermon there, such as I had never heard before. It was accompanied with amazing powerful workings of the Spirit on the hearts of the hearers; they were such as I think were never known before in the means of grace among us. He labours mostly in the counties of Cardigan, Carmarthen, and Pembroke. The Rev. H. Davies and the Rev. W. Williams grow exceedingly in talents and usefulness. The believers are generally strong and full of spiritual warmth and divine life. They do indeed adorn the Gospel. The weak Christians grow up under the teachings and comforts of the Holy Ghost—enjoying much of the real liberty of faith. The old professors are awakened and invigorated. It is really impossible to give correct and full ideas of the great work on paper. It is not a temporary thing, but has continued thus more or less for several years. The congregations are exceedingly large wherever we preach. Even some of the greatest opposers are not only silenced but constrained to own that the Lord is among us of a truth. The effects of the ministry are very evident in parts of Breconshire, Radnorshire, and Montgomeryshire; the souls of believers are very lively and happy there. Much of the divine fire kindleth where lukewarmness prevailed before. They meet in many places at five o'clock in the morning to adore and worship the Lord together. Meetings are resumed in some places in the evenings, and kept up all night in prayer and praise. The Lord commenced this revival by means of seemingly a very mean and unlikely instrument—an exhorter, who had been a cobbler. He is full of holy fire; no one is more owned by the Lord to awaken

and quicken souls than he is. They go on diligently in the Lord's work in Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire. Many are added unto the church; few, if any, draw back. The labourers enjoy much love and harmony together. We grow happier and happier in our several Associations. Our hearts in the last Assembly were inflamed with joy and our mouths with praises on hearing the news of your safe arrival in England. There are no alterations in any of our plans. Brother Benjamin Thomas, that was turned out from amongst the Dissenters for his zeal and attachment to us, and brother Ingram, are settled as general assistants to me. Yesterday we united in the general public fast of the nation; indeed it was a solemn day. The Lord was with us in prayer, and we entertain hopes of His good will towards the King and nation.

"The work of the Lord prospers much, I believe, in England. Brother Cennick and the other labourers are much blessed everywhere. I was last November called to an Association in London, having not been able to attend to the meetings at Bristol and Hampton, according to their kind invitations. I saw brother John Wesley before I came. He continues to be very loving. He has had some sore trials lately."

The success and spread of the Revival in Wales so gloriously depicted in the correspondence of Harris was not altogether unmarred by interruption. "The greatest bitterness," he writes, "that is manifested at present against the work proceeds from the learned men and carnal professors of every sect, whose legal hearts cannot rejoice to see the Lord coming in a way contrary to human expectation. And some of the Dissenters, ministers and people, join the gentry and carnal clergy in speaking evil of and opposing the work."

There arose about this time a species of persecution from another source. It is mentioned incidentally at the close of the following letter written to a young man who was about to enter the Ministry:—

“ Old Passage, April 6th, 1744.

“ My dear Brother,

“ Your case lies on my heart. I had more than common freedom to cry that the Lord would send, teach, lead, and fill you with zeal for His glory ; that He would cover your head and keep your heart and tongue under His own government to the very end. He alone has a right to send and to qualify whom He pleases for the work. It is no wonder you are bowed down with a sense of your corruptions and evil nature, and that you feel the buffetings of Satan. It is by a train of experience alone that we are brought to know God, the Saviour, and man in his miserable state as set forth in the Holy Scriptures, so as to be able to open divine truths with authority and demonstration, and seal them, if so called, with our blood. Acquaintance with God and our own hearts, and especially with the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, is essentially necessary to qualify us to be His ambassadors. For if the love of Christ doth not constrain us the discouragements that we shall meet from within and without will soon stop us. For when we truly see the nature of the work and begin to feel the weight of it we will with the Apostle cry, Who is sufficient for these things? But let not this discourage my young brother, but rather stir you up to look to Him who hath the government on his own shoulders, and humbly offer yourself to His service, and under a sense of the honour and glory of the office be willing to undergo all hardships to qualify you for such a place. I doubt not but with strong cries you continually and earnestly look up to the throne of grace. Soon the Lamb that stands on Mount Zion will make himself and his will more and more clear to you as you can bear it. The thirst in your heart to be useful to precious souls comes from Him ; and though as yet your knowledge of His will is but dark, be not discouraged ; since you have begun to speak let none but He shut your mouth. Having set your hand to the plough you know your order is

not to look back ; and in the work the Lord will make His will more and more known to your mind.

“ To-day the war was proclaimed at Bristol against France, and press-warrants are in constables’ hands to press men for the land service and marines. These things call loudly on us to join in prayer and humiliation. I trust that next general fast-day, if others will not, we shall be enabled to humble ourselves indeed both for our own and others’ sins, hoping the judgment over us may be averted, and the door be still kept open for the everlasting gospel.

“ I believe we shall not yet be given up to Popish darkness. Pray much, my dear man. O be much in secret with God, and He will teach you glorious things. Pray that you may be kept very humble at the feet of the Lord. Some of the brightest angels and greatest men have been ruined by this secret enemy, pride ; the danger of it is the greater because it is so hard to know it. But Jesus is above this and all other enemies. In Him let us rest, and to His arms I, with all earnestness, commit my dear fellow-soldier, and am, yours for ever,

HOWELL HARRIS.”

The declaration of war between England and France, referred to by Harris in this last letter, produced intense excitement throughout the kingdom. To the mind of Harris it was a source of anxiety, not only on account of the danger it implied to the Protestantism and religious liberty of the nation, but in particular because of the malicious ingenuity with which the foes of the Revival abused their power of impressment, and made it an instrument of persecution against the inoffensive Methodists. Not that he expected immunity from opposition under any circumstances in the present world. In his estimation a life of sanctity was a standing protest against sin, and could not fail to bring down the hostility of the world in whatever rank or station it was ex-

hibited. He lived in expectation of this opposition himself, and sought to bring others to look upon it as no strange thing, as may be seen from a letter he wrote about this time to the Countess of Huntingdon, who was now coming into prominence in connection with Methodist work at the Tabernacle, in London :—

“Most dear and honoured Madam,

“I am persuaded our dear Lord has loved you with an everlasting love, and does often give you to taste of the same, whilst others of your rank make themselves drunk with iniquity and move on hastily towards the bottomless pit. But oh, that free sovereign and everlasting love that calls those in time who were elected in eternity! What have we to do but admire more and more this wonderful subject, and exclaim, ‘Why me, Lord, why me?’ Methinks I perceive your heaven-born soul bow before your God and say, ‘Very true; it is unmerited love.’

“Well now, Madam, there are several Scriptures which should of course be brought home to your experience, such as ‘All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.’ ii. Tim. iii. 12. Let us, since in all probability opposition and persecution are the Christian’s lot, humbly entreat our blessed Lord for strength cheerfully to bear the cross, being well assured that they who suffer with Him shall also reign with Him in glory for ever. Rom. viii. 17. Yet a little while and it will be seen who are the mad people, and who are in their senses—those who mock at sin and laugh over their destruction, or the despised few that follow the Lamb. Therefore go on, dear Madam, in the power of His might, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple and subdue those enemies that are yet unsubdued in your happy soul. But whither am I going? Do I consider to whom I am writing? Is it not to a King’s daughter? And though there be some remains of sin in her, yet she shall soon be all glorious within and her clothing of wrought

gold. Whilst many of the great ones of the earth shall cry to the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, I am persuaded you shall be caught up with a shout to meet the Lord in the air, and shall be for ever with Him. Rev. vi. 16.

“I must conclude, as it is now midnight. I am ready to blush that I give you such a scribble to look over; but if it should please our dear Lord to bless it I shall attain my end in writing. There are multitudes that will go with us to church, sacrament, church meetings, family prayer, and all the outward forms of religion, and rest there. These are likely to escape persecution. God forbid we should thus mock Him and deceive our souls for fear of a flea-bite like them. Such, alas, shall be torn presently by friends in hell for ever.

“Let us take the whole armour of God and go against the prince of darkness—the evil spirit; and when we have attained that degree of holiness so as not only to hate sin in ourselves but also to reprove it in others, the profane rabble will open their black mouths in full cry after us, saying, There goes one of the Saints, one of those who do not cease to speak against our great goddess Diana, which is sin, when dressed in her best clothes.”

The persecution arising from the action of magistrates and others in directing their powers of impressment against the members of the Methodist Societies came near touching Mr. Harris in person, as it did Mr. John Wesley in England. Harris was not averse to serving his King in a military capacity. He was loyal to the centre of his being, and preached the duty of loyalty in his sermons, and made frequent mention of the King in his public prayers.* But he had a strong repugnance to acts of oppression and injustice, and sought, if

* Trevecca MSS.

possible, to obtain protection for himself and his co-religionists by every means in his power. On May 25, 1744, he addressed the Countess of Huntingdon upon the subject :—

“ Honoured Madam,

“ I took the liberty some time ago to send a line to your ladyship, and am persuaded you will not be offended at my doing myself this honour again. I think I am constrained by the love of that Jesus who is dear to you, yea, dearer than millions of lives or titles. His glory I know he condescends to manifest in your soul in a further degree than I am yet purified and emptied enough to receive. However, with my soul in the dust I must beg leave to join my praises to yours for what He has done in and for me since I saw your ladyship last. O what an honour it is to be employed by Him, though in the meanest office and place in His Church. Surely, then, a sense of the great glory and honour He has conferred on you, most noble lady, makes you willing to wash His feet and loath yourself with Job before him indeed. O that all the world did but behold His glory and worship before him! May He still animate your seraphic soul with zeal and divine wisdom as He has done hitherto, that you may be the happy means of bringing the savour of his knowledge to Court among our great ones. I think I feel freedom from Him, with humility, to write in hope your ladyship shall be thus honoured. I know He has armed your spirit with that courage and love that is invincible by any seeming impregnable opposition. When our Lord works who can let, oppose, roar, or look terrible? The enemy may, and will, and if the eye looks from God *we* may for a while discourage and weaken our hearts; but all shall turn to the furtherance of the work at last.

“ Dear Lady,—A sense of the honour that I trust your ladyship is not offended at my using this liberty breaks my heart before our dear Saviour. O that I may have a place in

your addresses to Him. Blessed be His name, He favours me now with a further share of His sufferings. Indeed the cross which was bitter to Him because the wrath that was due to us was upon Him, He makes sweet to me. Satan seems to have his chain a little lengthened; the magistrates by the liberty and order given them to impress idle and loose men for his majesty's service, whom the country was burthened with, have shown us also how much of the spirit of Bonner and Jeffreys doth influence them. They have taken up one James Ingram, whose heart the Lord had engaged to assist me in my place and work, to write and copy for me, go on errands, and take care of my outward things, &c. He had been with me near a year and a half, and was, when apprehended, at work at my dwelling-house at Trevecca. He hath been confined in Brecon Prison about a fortnight, though I sent the Commissioners word that I had hired him, and agreed he should live as myself; but because it was not for a space of time they said he was no servant, but under the character of the persons called for by the Act. They seek for me also, and have charged the constables to take me; though they knew me to have a settled abode at Trevecca, and that I had a mother, and maid, beside this young man, as a family under my care. They have also taken another of our brethren, a tailor, to send him to the army. If the Lord calls I esteem it the same to go home by a French musket or sword as to die a natural death; but if He does not call, in vain are all efforts to destroy us. But though Paul had a witness from heaven that none of the men with him should perish, yet he said that if the sailors did not abide in the ship they could not be saved, knowing that the end and means must not be divided. For as it is a sin to trust in means and turn our eye and dependence from God, I think it is a sin so to trust in Him as to slight or neglect or not to use in faith all lawful means. Thus we find our Saviour and His apostles did and commended. But how to

act in such cases or what means to use I cannot tell. If I should be favoured with some proper direction I trust it would be used to God's glory. I fear I have tired your ladyship, but I am loath to give over; my soul is inflamed in writing, and, O Lamb of God, grant that her's may be so in reading, and there will be answered the prayers, ends, and real abiding desires of, honoured and happy lady, your ladyship's most dutiful and obedient humble servant in our dear Lord,

HOWELL HARRIS."

The indifference to the manner of his death exhibited in Harris's letter to the Countess displays a spirit that was essentially martial; and it is safe to affirm from his well-known intrepidity, that in the event of his having, to use his own expression, "to go home by a French musket or sword," he would have dispatched a goodly number of the enemy beforehand to announce his approach. His chief concern, however, was for the cause of religion. Writing to Mr. Charles Wesley on the same date with the last letter to the Countess, he says: "The opposition increases. When Satan sees one lot of his soldiers won't do he stirs up another force." He was at the same time full of confidence, for he adds, "But the word is of God, and will stand, for He reigns in hell as well as in heaven." Even poor James Ingram, Harris's personal attendant, was not cast down. During the fortnight in which he was immured in the prison at Brecon he addressed his fellow-prisoners three times a day on the things that belonged to their everlasting peace.

CHAPTER XIX.

MARRIAGE

ABOUT five or six years previous to the time at which we have now arrived, Mr. Harris had entertained peculiar views in reference to the institution of marriage. He thought it inconsistent with the higher consecration of Christian life ; and in that persuasion, which lasted upon him for about three years, he was prejudiced against the institution, and not only formed a resolution never to contract a matrimonial union for himself, but spoke against it in general. He was reclaimed from his mistaken impression by a sudden illumination upon 1 Timothy iv. 3, where the apostle denounces those who would arise and indulge their peculiarities by “forbidding to marry ;” and then by a series of mental steps, that took over two years to mature, he came to the knowledge, as he informs Mr. Charles Wesley, according to a custom prevailing with the fathers of Methodism of consulting one another and exercising jurisdiction over each other in all the important concerns of life, that it was possible for him to marry in the Lord, and live in union with a wife as though he had her not.*

His views upon the subject are set forth in the following extract from a letter written to his friend Humphreys, March 5th, 1743 :—“I had,” he says, “received before information of your marriage in brother Grace’s letter. I felt immediately great power to wrestle with God for you both. I believe you will be blessed to each other and to the church. He that called you both out of your natural state into the Kingdom of

* Trevecca MSS.

His dear Son, will give you all supplies of faith, love, and tenderness, with all inward purity, and such wisdom and propriety as shall be necessary to adorn the Gospel, so that all that observe you may see in the one and the other a pattern to copy after, and may all learn of you to commit the management of this as well as all other affairs to Him who is infinite love and wisdom, and so will not and cannot do anything but what is good and wise. I beg my tenderest regards to your wife; say that I have double regard for her as a sister and a helpmeet for my dear fellow-labourer, not doubting but that Jesus will make her sensible of the greatness of the work she has now undertaken, and that she will be enabled, by faith, to go to Him for all holy tempers and instructions that are necessary for filling so great a place in the Church of God. What need of strong faith, burning zeal, a resigned will, and a tender and contrite heart, and of being prepared for all circumstances of riches and poverty, praise and dispraise, liberty and imprisonment, willing to submit when God calls her husband to his work from home as well as there. But where am I going? It is enough; the care of every individual as well as of the whole Church rests on Jesus Christ."

Writing to his intimate friend and coadjutor, the Rev. Howell Davies, of Pembrokeshire, April 2, 1744, he addresses him also upon the same topic:—

"As I understood," he says, "by the last few moments' conversation I had with you, you are persuaded it is your heavenly Father's will, that you should enter the marriage state. As it is an affair of such moment, and as your character is so public, I doubt not but you have had many anxious thoughts lest you should mistake the will of God. I can indeed sympathize with you, for I see more and more that our happiness does not consist in possessing the creature, but in being delivered from our own wills, so that God may reign. One brother has observed that everything is to us what God

makes it; and that if our expectations are built upon the gifts, graces, and seeming fitness of the creature we shall be disappointed. I find that it is a great thing to be a husband, father, and the head of a family, to behave as a man of God, and an inhabitant of the New Jerusalem. Let us help each other in our prayers, that every step we take in this great affair may furnish a pattern for others who are more influenced by example than by precept. Let it appear to all that we seek not ourselves, but the Lord Jesus Christ and His interest. The improper love of beauty and of the world is what by our profession we declare against. Those things were upon my mind for a long time, until as I thought the Lord showed me His will. I saw that I should be nothing better than an idolator until I could marry for God and His Church, not for myself, but only in the Lord; and blessed be his name I have felt something of this in my soul, being willing that I should be truly resigned to His will. 1 Cor. vii. 39."

The lady of Harris's choice was probably the one for whom he confessed an admiration in one of his early letters to his brother Joseph. She had been converted under his own ministry not long after the commencement of his public career, and while he was discoursing on the conduct of Moses in choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. She soon became a fellow-labourer in the work of the Revival, as did many others of her sex throughout the length and breadth of the Principality; and would frequently correspond with Harris, who previous to the declaration of his affection used to address her simply as "Dear Sister Williams." As the intimacy grew he adopted a more familiar tone, and in token of having found in her the ideal of the confiding friend for whom his nature pined, he would sometimes write to her as his "Dear Jonathan." When he became the accepted lover his terms of address were still more tender, for she became his "Nancy," his "Dearest Nancy," and occasionally "O my loveliest Nancy."

It would be a mistake to imagine from this that his letters to her were made up of the ordinary inanities of courtship. As soon as the first words of salutation were over there was a plunge into the depths of Christian experience, and sheet after sheet of writing would be thrown off, sometimes at midnight, and as frequently at three or four o'clock in the morning, until, after reading many scores of such letters as we have done, one is filled at once with admiration at the sustained loftiness of his tone, and pity at the slave-like and reiterated yearning of his heart for a soul congenial with his own in its sympathy with the one work that had swallowed up his life. "I dread," he wrote to her, "that you should love me after the flesh. Carnal tenderness is not what I want, but a wife to watch over me, to help me spiritually in my work, to stir me up to diligence, love, and purity, and such as by her faith should strengthen mine and be enabled to bear part with me in all my trials and sufferings; such as I could confide in and would do all to the Lord, loving his glory more than life, family, or husband. I believe you are in heart persuaded these are the beauties and the portion I desire with my wife, that she may be one who walks with God, having her conversation in heaven, and whose heart, being set on fire by the Lord, should be conveying zeal to help up the kindling of mine."

The marriage took place shortly after Harris returned from one of his visits to London in the summer of 1744. His own account is as follows:—"A close examination was laid on my spirit, what motives lead me to the matrimonial state. I examined myself as to whether I was led by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the deceitfulness of riches, and found through grace that I was free from all these evils. Those words of the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah (xlv. 5) came also with power to my heart, 'Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not;' and in the light of these words I saw that if I entered upon the married state for myself, and

not for God and His Church, I was an idolator. Then I could not rest till I felt a resignation of myself in this matter wholly from my own hand to the Lord's, to do with me according to His own way and time. Now I saw that the marriage state is a great mystery to such as are brought together by the Lord, who in that relation shall know the mutual love that is between Christ and His Church. At last, after much prayer, self-examination, and also great opposition, I was joined in matrimony with Anne, the daughter of John Williams, of Skreen, Esq., June 18, 1744, a time ever to be remembered by me, as nine years to this day I received the spirit of adoption to seal my everlasting salvation."

On the day of his wedding he wrote the following prayer, extracted from the Church of England service, in his diary:—"O God, who hast consecrated the state of matrimony to such an excellent mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity between Christ and his church, look mercifully upon these thy servants, that both this man may love his wife according to thy word, as Christ loved his spouse, the Church, and gave Himself for it, loving and cherishing it even as his own flesh; and also that this woman may be loving and amiable, faithful and obedient to her husband, and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace be a follower of holy and godly matrons."

It would seem from the whole tenor of Harris's wedded life that the spirit of the above petition was infused into it. He himself was a tender and affectionate husband, and Mrs. Harris a faithful and devoted wife. She entered heartily into all his plans, was affectionately invited and welcomed to the houses of his numerous friends, and would frequently accompany him on his journeys. In short, their union was sanctified by a thorough consecration to religion, and they journeyed through life as heirs together of the grace of God. They had, however, one severe trial. Mr. Harris's reputation was attacked. The nuptials, the license for which had been procured

through the kindness of Mr. Marmaduke Gwynne, Harris's great friend, had scarcely been solemnized when 'the enemy' invented and spread a malicious rumour reflecting upon the honour of their marriage. This report was caught up by the Reformer's foes with fiendish glee as likely to cause the downfall of one whom no opposition could defeat; but being a lie in its very inception it confounded none but the liars who had forged it, and left the Reformer and Mrs. Harris to pursue the even course of their harmonious and godly union. The following letters sent by Harris to his wife breathe an ardour of affection and a depth of gratitude to God seldom surpassed in the history of domestic correspondence:—

“ London, April 4, 1747.

“ My dearest, dearest Nancy,

“ Last night I received thy kindest letter, and though I have but a moment yet I must send these lines. Whilst others are filled with complaints our scrips are laden with praises. Whilst we are kept in the dust all is well and shall be well, and God will dwell among us, for He has said it. Go on, my dearest; how soon we shall have no language but praise and perfection. O Jesus! we are thine; do what thou wilt with us both in time and eternity; let us have but the honour to be doorkeepers in Thy house. O Nancy, my dear Nancy, we are eternally one in Christ Jesus. Let us bow, and love, and adore, and wonder, and sink down in profound humility. I could write and bow for ever.

“ It is but a fortnight now and I shall once more see her whom my soul indeed loves above all the sons and daughters of Adam. O my love, my Nancy, what shall I do for thee? I labour to death to maintain thee, and bear all hardships and trials for thee. Thou happiest of women! what love had the Saviour in store for me in giving me such a wife so faithful and tender. For ever may He reward thee for leaving all to go with the chief of sinners. Surely we do but begin to

love now we begin to know the mystery and happiness of the married state. I feel in my soul what love Christ had to his spouse. Tell my dear mother she is dearer to me than ever. My love to Will and Bettie, and all the neighbours, is what tongue and pen can't express. Had I wings I would fly to you all, and tell you what love I find in Jesus. O that I could make you all the happiest family in the world. But he that can make you happy and has brought you together will bless you indeed. This night fortnight I hope, God willing, to see you all to tell you what wonders He has done for the chief of sinners since I saw you. O my Nancy, farewell, farewell, farewell."

"London, August 19, 1749.

"My dearest Nancy,

"Can words set forth our happiness, even what we now enjoy, notwithstanding the weakness of our faith and the strength of our corruptions? What, then, may we be sure we shall enjoy when our hearts are more enlarged and our eyes more opened to behold the ineffable glory that is before us? Our happiness consists in being raised above depraved self and nature, not consulting our sinful wills and wisdom, knowing no one after the flesh, but walking in the continual view of eternity, living indeed by faith in the Son of God. In this faith I feel I love thee more than ever; I see thee more and more precious, seeing daily more of the glory of our marriage. And in this faith I feel my little girl more dear to me as being the fruit of a marriage brought about by the Lord.

"I came here last night with brother Beaumont, very well, having had a more pleasant journey than usual. We had much of the Lord's presence with us all the way; our souls kept near Him; our time was much improved. I find that the love, union, and fellowship that is in God never comes to an end, because the Lord never changes. Our acquaintance

may be increased, and ourselves brought under new ties, but our hearts shall be enlarged accordingly, and each shall have his proper place in our hearts; we shall gradually become like our blessed Saviour. I see the Lord takes care of me; He makes my heart suitable to my place and the various obligations and ties he lays me under; He gives me faith, when my heart warps and flinches from the way of duty, to go to Him; and He washes and heals and rectifies me. I am not worthy of thy love; but vile as I am the Lord enables me to love thee in some degree as He loves His church. To make and see thee happy, to love thee and bear thy burdens is my delight as well as my duty; and the more my soul loves and cares for others the deeper thou goest into my heart. Thy joys and sorrows, thy cares and trials are indeed mine. O the mystery of the union! Let that hour be blessed in which I first saw thee. I know thou wilt, consistently with this union, rejoice in seeing my heart running over with pure love to others according to the ties the Holy Ghost lays me under, and the place and office He has honoured me with in his Church. That I should carry my trials to thee would only add to thine. It is enough to apply by faith to the faithful, loving, and tender-hearted Saviour that has and will not only love me, but also honour me. Surely I am the happiest creature in the world. Let me but know that thou livest by faith in and with Him, and it shall be an addition indeed to my bliss. To cherish and nurse thee up for Him is one and great part of my charge. When thou abidest in Him by faith all thy cares and burdens shall be removed from thee; cheerfulness, peace, love, joy shall be given thee instead of hurry and uneasiness of mind, reasoning and grief. Then thou shalt indeed be a blessing to all around thee."

The happy event of Mr. Howell Harris's marriage took place in the midst of multitudinous toils, and at a crisis when the nation at large was inflamed with martial ardour, and

when Harris himself experienced no abatement of the malignity with which he was persecuted on all hands. At this juncture not only did the black mouths of the rabble, as he puts it, vomit forth their venom, but even the great ones were at their wit's end and foamed at the mouth in the impotence of their rage. They offered £5 reward to have him taken and pressed for the army. His friends in London believed that he had been apprehended for that purpose, and made application to the Earl of Stairs to have him released ; * but he still enjoyed his freedom and pursued his mission openly, a total stranger to fear. At length his enemies had recourse to a different method. A number of county gentlemen being called together on August 28, 1744, for the business of the Assizes in Brecon, made the following presentment to the presiding Judge :—

“ We, the Grand Jury of the County of Brecon, &c., having received in charge amongst other learned and laudable observations made by our Hon. Judge of this circuit, that we ought to present every obstruction to our Holy Religion, as being the most valuable part of our Constitution, and it being too well known that there are several (as we are advised) illegal Field and other meetings of persons styl'd Methodists, whose preachers pretend to expound the Holy Scriptures by virtue of Inspiration, by which means they collect together great numbers of disorderly Persons, very much endangering the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King ; which Proceedings, unless timely suppressed, may endanger the Peace of the Kingdom in general ; and at all Adventures the pretended Preachers or Teachers at their irregular meetings, by their Enthusiastic Doctrines, do very much confound and disorder the minds of great numbers of His Majesty's good Subjects, which in Time may prove of dangerous Tendency, even to the Confusion of our Established Religion,

* Trevecca MSS.

and consequently the overthrowing our good Government, both in Church and State ; and that we may be as particular as we can in detecting this villainous scheme, we present the Houses following, viz. : Pontiwâl, in the Parish of Broynllys, being the House of John Watkins, and the House of Howell Harris in Treveckah, in the Parish of Talgarth, both in this County, as places entertaining and encouraging such dangerous assemblies ; and humbly desire our Hon. Judge, if the Authority of this Court is not sufficient to suppress the Disorders, that he will be pleased to apply, for that End and Purpose, to some Superior Authority, whereby our Religion, and the Peace of the Nation in general, and this County in particular, may be preserved upon our antient and laudable Establishment.” *

During the month in which the foregoing presentment was drawn up a Methodist Association was held at Llangeitho, Cardiganshire, when the following resolution was passed, viz., “ That all should zealously stir up the people to a strict walk with God, and to bear fruit to his glory and honour.” Again at a Monthly Association held October 23, 1744, at Trevecca, where Harris resided, it was agreed “ To keep a day of humiliation, to be employed in prayer and suitable exhortations to the people, in our own families and in private ; and to keep such a day once a month from henceforward to mourn over our sins and those of the whole church and the world, but especially those committed in the seat of war, and in our own nation ; also to remember our persecuted brethren, and to stir up the people to holiness and fruitfulness to the Lord.”

The foregoing resolutions are a sufficient refutation of the charges contained in the “ presentment ” of the Breconshire grand jury, and furnish a comment upon the total inability of the gentlemen who composed it to comprehend the source and bearing of the great religious movement going forward in

* “ Gentleman’s Magazine,” 1744, p. 504.

their midst. The attempt to suppress the revival by means of the appeal to the Court of Assize, and the suggestion of applying to a still higher authority, was an ignominious failure; but the advantage of being able to harass the Methodists by means of impressment was still pursued, and was to some of the exhorters a source of great apprehension. The general progress of the work was so far from being checked by this novel method of persecution that in some instances, as we learn from the report of an Association held at Trevecca August 8, 1745, the very men who were pressed became the means of its propagation. This was the case in North Wales, where "the gospel was brought to the towns by a young man that had been forced for the service, whose own captain requested him to preach and stood by him to defend him with a drawn sword in his hand." The general condition of things at the time may be seen in the following letter from Harris to the Rev. Charles Wesley, which reveals the aspect of the work in more than one direction :—

"Trevecca, July 16, 1745.

"My dear honoured Brother,

"I will forget all distance and use that freedom I know you have love enough to bear and put up with. You are near my heart. It is a matter of joy for me to see those that move in the most conspicuous situations in the vineyard of our Lord highly favoured with all those shining qualifications, by which they are enabled to silence God's enemies, to thwart the malice of the wicked, and to adorn the glorious Gospel. Though I am anxious, from a sense of God's love to me, to be more useful, yet I see His wisdom in respect to His own glory and my real good, in that He doth not increase my gifts and usefulness; it is because I cannot bear more. Oh what depths of iniquity lie lurking in my heart. But blessed be God that I am what I am. I find it is given me to rejoice in the success of all others equally with, if not more than in

my own; also to long most anxiously that all who love our Lord may be brought to love one another. I believe that a great and glorious work is begun on earth. The Lord is indeed gone forth. Though for some wise ends some little difference yet remains in our expressions, and perhaps in our conceptions of some things, I am persuaded it is the Lord's will we should bear with each other in great tenderness; that will bring glory to His name even when we are in the dust. Col. iii. 1, 2; 1 Peter i. 22. I believe we have all cause to be humbled before God, and to loathe ourselves that we have not been more tender of each other, and more careful to avoid offences before the world. However, I believe the Lord will wipe away our reproaches, and bring us together in time. For the present let us forbear in great love, and fortify and strengthen each other's hands as much as possible. Every one will have his own peculiar manner of thinking, and way of expressing himself; but all who fully cleave to the Head and Fountain—Christ, and Him Crucified—should give and take brotherly freedom, should not be offended, nor put the worst construction on others, but endeavour to understand fully what they mean. I love and honour those persons, of whatever denomination they may be, that are humbled at the Saviour's feet, and made acquainted with the mystery of His blood by His Spirit, though there may be many things amiss in them. When I see that the Lord has revealed His Son in them, and given them a true and lively faith in Him, I wait, being assured that all other things shall be soon added.

“Blessed be God, I can send you good news—the Gospel never ran with more speed and glory than now. Satan rages horribly, as if he would swallow us up alive; but our Lord has assured us that he has but a short time to reign. Congregations are everywhere increasing, fresh doors opening, and a new commission as it were given. Many were called and wounded, whilst others were so favoured with views of our Immanuel as to be kept up whole nights singing His

praises; they were so filled with His love that they were obliged to say, 'Lord, hold Thy hand.'

"The gentlemen in parts of Breconshire and Carmarthen-shire hunt us like partridges; but still the work prospers. Four of our brethren have been pressed, and are now in Brecon jail. One of them was apprehended last year. Of the three one was a private man, one a Welsh Schoolmaster to the Rev. G. Jones, and the other, who taught an English School, was one who exhorted and is full of faith."

CHAPTER XX.

INCIDENTAL EVILS

IT was almost unavoidable that a movement so mighty as the Welsh Methodist Revival should be attended with evils. One of those evils was the exceedingly demonstrative nature of the whole movement. In many of their public meetings, especially those that were conducted by the most powerful of the leaders, there were such loud cries and ejaculations, such rejoicing and ecstasy, as to give offence to the sensibilities of men of quieter temperament. Sometimes those cries resulted from the mental agony of hardened sinners, who were suddenly alarmed by the flood of light let in upon their condition and danger by the awful truths so solemnly uttered, and from their subsequent rejoicing when deliverance was realized through the life and death of the Son of God. In other cases they were the involuntary screams and shrieks of men and women whose nerves, being strung to the utmost by impassioned and prolonged oratory, could find no other mode of relief; while in the case of the hale and strong, whom nothing could possibly alarm, they were indulged in from the desire to fall in with the prevailing custom, or from a wish to cover the want of religion in private with the pretence of seriousness in public.

The scrutiny that was necessary to discover the real motives of such men, whenever they came forward to join the societies, was a source of timidity to the reserved, became a temptation to the insincere to act the part of hypocrites, and gave colour

to the charge that was certain of being made by the enemies of the work, that its conductors were inquisitorial in their proceedings, and proud and despotic in the exercise of their authority.

Not the least of the evils to which the awakening gave rise was the opportunity it afforded ignorant and uncultivated men to go about in the capacity of preachers, and to shock by the extravagance of their zeal the more cultured sensibilities of educated hearers, and furnish the irreligious of all classes with subjects for profane jesting. This offence at the untutored enthusiasm of some of the early Methodists was not confined to the scholarly clergy of the Establishment, but was felt even by the refined taste of the Nonconformists;* and this possibly was the reason why so many of them held aloof, and sneered at those of their ministerial brethren who chose to assist, while God was regenerating the nation through comparatively illiterate men.

The charge, however, that the manner and language of a few of the exhorters was in some degree obnoxious, was not without its foundation, and had reached the ears and in some measure influenced the mind of one whose freedom from prejudice at any rate entitled him to a hearing. The Rev. Griffith Jones, himself uncanonical in many of his proceedings, and ever the personal friend and adviser of Harris, and a promoter of the Revival in many of its aspects, had been prevailed upon to give heed to disquieting rumours, and had early evinced an amount of misgiving that betokened mistrust and that moved him to correct the evil by beginning at the fountain-head. His anxiety arose possibly from that excess of zeal in his youthful contemporary Harris, which kept him so incessantly active that he had no time to inform his mind and correct his judgment to the extent Mr. Jones would think necessary. Whether or not he regarded the founding of the Association as a further imprudence, and the prominent part

* "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," p. 368.

taken by Harris in the administration of its affairs as an additional temptation to spiritual pride and dominion, he continued to manifest a fatherly solicitude and to admonish his friend against undue assumption in the exercise of his power. Those admonitions were received by Mr. Harris in the same Christian spirit in which they were given; at the same time he thought it his duty to vindicate and maintain his position without abating one jot of his zeal at the instigation of friend or foe. The following letter, which is full of the spirit of respect and true humility, breathes at the same time its author's characteristic energy and conviction. It was written to Mr. Jones from Bristol, January 26, 1746, and is in the following terms:—

“ Rev. and honoured Sir,

“ It is with sincere esteem and the warmest affection I sit down to trouble you with this, assuring you that my soul is drawn out in thankfulness to our dear Saviour for the many valuable gifts and graces He has bestowed upon you, particularly for giving you a spirit to make a stand against ignorance and profaneness, and blessing your labours in an especial manner, even beyond expectation, in this our poor benighted church. My soul has often wept bitterly over it, labouring amidst trials from all quarters, which none but He that sees all secrets knows. I am still resolved to go on, in faith and love, willing to bear all, to have my honest attempts mistaken and ill-judged, but trusting and expecting that our dear Saviour will vindicate His cause and give those concerned a right apprehension of the work I have been counted worthy to take a small share in. Our Zion may at length become once more the praise of the whole earth, and sit as once she did as princess amongst the provinces. How has my heart rejoiced on seeing any beginning or kind of revival, weak as it might seem, through my poor instrumentality. Let my name and labour be forgotten, only let the Saviour be known

and adored, His truth preached and believed, and His poor despised church raised out of darkness and formality to her former faith and love, and once more put on her beautiful garments. This alone is my desire, and I am persuaded the desire of all other labourers, who have been thrust out in the same way. Often have we wished and prayed that those who are in power did but really know our motives and aims, the difficulties we struggle with, and the good that is done to souls. If they knew these things they would surely be moved with compassion, their judgment of us would be altered, and they would no longer think us mad enthusiasts.

“What if, in our zeal against ignorance and profaneness, we betray our imperfections, drop a few unguarded expressions, and in some things for want of more experience go too far, being perhaps imposed upon by designing hypocrites; shall no other side of the work be viewed? Or are there no considerations to soften the charges brought against it? Are we not sorry if we give just offence to any, or discover a spirit and behaviour contrary to the Gospel? Do we not openly acknowledge and bewail our infirmities and profess our earnest desire of conformity to our Saviour’s example and precept? Though we are refused regular admission to the Communion for reasons which doubtless seem sufficient to our superiors according to the light in which we are set before them; though we are publicly reproached and branded, even from the pulpit, on account of that which does not belong to us; and though many in their own parish churches have been refused the sacraments for no other reasons than frequenting our societies, yet we still determine to continue in prayer for our desolate church, and to abide in her until we are entirely put out. I know too well her spiritual poverty, though she in her fallen state is ready to say that she wants nothing! The work done among us is too evident to be denied, and is clearly as to the substance of it a work of the Lord, though attended with some unavoidable weakness

which true charity will cover. We have ventured our lives for several years under all discouragements in the face of an angry world, frequently in danger of being stoned to death, and sometimes having our blood mingled with the dust, because we invited sinners to the only Saviour ! The Lord knows that, being constrained by love to Him and His church, we have travelled incessantly day and night through rain and wind, frost and snow, discoursing in all weathers in the open air, seeking no other reward in this world but what we had in our consciences. We have endured scandals, hard speeches and reproaches, esteeming it a sufficient recompense to hear poor ignorant wretches crying out, ‘What shall we do to be saved?’—breaking off their sins by righteousness, following the Lord they once blasphemed, and bringing forth the good fruit of obedience in their future lives. This recompense we undeniably have, though several tares grow up with the wheat. These at first make a fine show, then discover their true character and nature, and occasion an evil report. This we have witnessed with aching hearts ; yet, blessed be God, there are several thousands in England and Wales who prove by gospel characters that they have enlisted into the army of Christ indeed. To these the Lord hath made us the means of salvation by plucking them as fire-brands out of the burning. Oh, did our superiors know only the hundredth part of the real good done, they would be so far from discouraging or thinking ill of the work, which so evidently bespeaks its great Author, that they would enquire more into it and endeavour to satisfy themselves on just evidence ; so that whatever enthusiastic flights, false zeal, or other irregularities may be mixed with our proceedings, I am persuaded that many masters of our Israel would with tears or praises fall down before Him who sits upon the throne, and say, ‘Verily the Lord has visited our land, and this is the Lord’s doing.’ Who besides could open the eyes of the blind, turn the wicked from the evil of his ways, and make the profane

scoffer a humble persevering worshipper of God? Of this there are, through His grace, innumerable instances. I am sure that as you see and know the importance, weight, and burden of the great work of dealing with souls, and perceive the trials and snares that surround us from various kinds of people, from an invisible enemy, and, above all, from the unfathomable inbred depth of iniquity, you cannot help weeping over us before the Lord. It is a miracle that our heads are kept above the water. O dear Sir, who is sufficient for these things? If I had not a well-grounded persuasion that the work is the Lord's, and that He hath undertaken the care, weight, and management, my hands would hang down under a thousand discouraging considerations. And it is by humble dependence on the grace, wisdom, and faithfulness I see in Him that I move. O Sir, help us with your prayers, for never were such weak, unworthy, insufficient worms employed in so great a work. O how it will at last bring Him honour and praise, before men and angels, for ever employing and blessing in any degree such poor and justly despised instruments! Your cautions against pride are always seasonable and blessed to me, for I can never sufficiently value the privilege of faithful admonitions—I need them continually. When I am made in some measure poor in spirit I am humble. Yet I soon forget my nothingness, my need of fresh supplies of grace every moment, and that I stand continually by faith alone. What would become of me if our dear and faithful Redeemer did not provide thorns for my flesh daily, a fresh buffeting continually? How well it is for me that of a truth I am enabled to believe that He died for me, and that because He lives I shall live also. I am kept by His power alone through faith to salvation. Help, Sir, O! help in the great work of endeavouring to snatch many poor sinners as brands out of the fire. Pray help us for the Lord's sake all you can every day. Zech. iii. 2; Jude 23.—Yours, &c.,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

It may be safely affirmed with regard to any evils incidental to the Welsh Methodist Revival that they were unimportant, and even infinitesimal compared with its incalculable benefits. Besides the awakening of many clergymen and of thousands of laymen within the folds of the Establishment, the existing Nonconformist denominations were preserved by its means from a state of languor, and became possessed of a degree of warmth and activity that was fast becoming a strange thing ; and when the societies or experience meetings were established by the Methodists, they were speedily revived and made general by the dissenting denominations, and are at the present day to such a degree a characteristic of the Nonconformists of Wales, that while the appellation of Methodist is confined to one organization, the Methodist spirit is apparent in all.

As to the employment of ignorant exhorters, it was a totally unavoidable evil. The converts and societies became in a short time so numerous, and their demand for immediate spiritual oversight so imperative, that in the absence of thoroughly educated and furnished men, there remained nothing to be done but to utilize the material at hand by making appointments in each place from amongst the converts themselves. But while some of the exhorters were lamentably deficient, there were others whose names have already been mentioned, as well as many who have not been mentioned, who soon acquired a merited prominence on account of their average good sense and usefulness. These latter, while innocent of the culture of the schools, were equal in general information to many of the dissenting ministers and clergymen of their day, whereas in exact and ready knowledge of the one inspired Book, whose spirit they had caught, and which they knew from beginning to end, they were in advance of many whose taste was more polished ; and when they passed away they transmitted to their followers a spirit that became productive in the next generation of a race of preachers, who, in the

brilliance and effectiveness of their powers, outshone the best of the original class. In short, whatever the evils incidental to the mighty Revival, they were so immeasurably counter-balanced by its undoubted advantages, that it is safe with Dr. Thomas Rees to affirm that "Methodism is one of Wales's most inestimable blessings."* It came at the outset from a source not human, and when it entered the mind of Harris and his co-adjutors to give permanence to the prevailing features of the movement by incorporating the societies or churches by means of the Association, an epoch was formed in the history of the work, and a step was taken that heaven has been pleased to sanction. In fact, the Association stamped upon the converts the imposing grandeur of a disciplined force advancing harnessed from sin as the Israelites from the land of their bondage; and such was the popular esteem in which it was held that it soon developed into national importance, and has long been the heritage of all the sects. Differing from the cold and formal Nonconformist Associations that were previously held, it became the centre of a wide-spread influence; and when once it became known in any locality that an Association was expected, the one or two days open-air preaching that was an invariable feature of the assembly was a time of general stir. Thousands of people would then come together, and when the princes of the pulpit came out at their best, the decrease of ungodliness and the increase of the churches was palpable and cheering.

Now and again those immense gatherings would be subject to disturbance. The drunken and degraded, regarding them as an obvious token of the advancement of religion and a menace to all they held dear, could not behold them without annoyance and rage; but the disturbances were the exception and not the rule. The rabble, who derived amusement from hounding a solitary preacher, were awed by the presence of numbers; and when they did succeed in breaking up a meet-

* "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," p. 368.

ing by their howling and threats, the temporary inconvenience affected not the general march of the work.

An instance is mentioned of an attempt to interfere with an Association that was held at Llandovery, Carmarthenshire, when the fortune of the meeting was retrieved by the dauntless courage of Mr. Howell Harris. Rowlands, Williams, Davies, and others were already in the town, and the proceedings had already commenced, when it became apparent that opposition was brooding. The hordes of the enemy had gathered from the neighbouring districts, and advancing to the din of horns, bells, kettles, and drums, and every imaginable noise, came down upon the meeting like a violent storm. The difficulty of proceeding, and the danger from the missiles hurled, was so great, that Williams invited his brethren to his own residence at Pant-y-celyn, about two miles distant, where he thought they could hold their assembly in peace; and they were in the act of retreating when they were met on the road by Mr. Howell Harris on his way to the gathering. Enquiring the direction and cause of their flight, and being informed that it was impossible to proceed at Llandovery on account of danger to life, he exclaimed, "Is that all! Here is a life for the sake of Christ; let us go back, they shall have this poor body of mine." Then waving them to return he marched back at their head, stepped on to the deserted platform, threw aloft his arms, and called out with such energy and command the words—"Let us pray," that a solemn hush at once ensued, and when the intercession was over it was felt that, in addition to the courage of man, the power of God had also been experienced, for all were attentive and affected, and the work went forward without molestation to the end of the day.*

There was no one who by this period had come to admire the many remarkable qualities of Harris so much as his own distinguished brother Joseph. In the autumn of 1746 Mr.

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 57.

Joseph Harris paid him a visit at Trevecca, after which he returns to London, and in a letter he wrote October 4th, in which he gave an account of his journey, he expresses himself to the following effect :—"I hope you were not out upon the hills after you left us on Monday. Dear brother, I know how to value your love, and nobody admires more your abilities, fortitude, and integrity than I do; and perhaps among your own friends few have these qualities in so strong a light. I don't mean to flatter you, but am afraid it is flattering myself if I think there is a pretty deal of resemblance between us." The dominant tone of Harris's spirit is seen in the following letters. Writing from London, March 19, 1747, he addresses Mr. Kinsman, of Plymouth :—

"Dear Brother,

"I long to hear how you go on, trusting that our dear Saviour becomes more precious to you, drawing you from everything to himself, causing you to weep and mourn over sinners by reason of their lost and ruined state, and the want of conformity to Him in yourself and others. Oh, when shall he reign as King in the hearts of all his followers? When shall every thought and motion within us be brought into subjection to him? This must surely be our strong desire, as we become more acquainted with him. We should then long to have the same mind as is in Him, and desire to love as he loveth, and to act to others, even towards the rebellious, as he hath to us even when we were enemies, with forbearance, patience, and love. Pray let us always strive for all the fruits of the Spirit, and especially faith, love, and humility, that all by our fruits may be obliged to own that we are his disciples. My particular wish is, and has been, that my lot may be cast among such as are indeed without guile, and are deeply acquainted with and increase in true poverty of spirit, and are transformed into the image and loving spirit of Jesus, who loves His redeemed ones notwithstanding the various infirmi-

ties that may appear in them either in judgment or in practice.

“ My dear brother, if our Saviour intends you for any further service in his great and glorious family you shall meet with various trials. Let your heart therefore be prepared for them from within and without, from the world and the Church, from the prejudices, weaknesses, and corruptions of the Lord's people, from the sinister views, worldly wisdom and pharisaical tempers of carnal professors, and the bigotry and narrow-mindedness of others. But let not my dear brother's heart fail him under these and a thousand other things. Cry mightily for the witness of the Spirit, that you may see and know your work and sphere of action. Then you will be able to commit in faith yourself and all your burdens into the Lord's hands, and expect every qualification, strength, and wisdom from Him who employs you. Then you will not go away from the work nor seek praise from man or your own heart, but you will thankfully embrace the cross, seeing it the highest honour and privilege to suffer afflictions, as well as to be active for Christ's bride. O my brother, a great work is begun on earth, and where it will end God only knows ; but happy are those that shall be employed by Him.”

Again he writes, May 10th, 1747, to another of the exhorters in England, whom he addresses thus :—

“ Dear brother Edwards,

“ I assure you, my dear brother, that your burdens are mine. I wish I could stop your eyes and ears to all that grieves you ; only look to the wounded Saviour. If brother Adams and you had freedom together it would give me pleasure, for I know your hearts and eyes move the same way, and it is only Satan that weakens your hearts to each other, suggesting jealousies by bad tongues. Let nothing weigh down your righteous soul for one moment. I am sure we shall do well. I trust you will find an open ear, a tender

heart, and sweet sympathy in me to bear your burdens, for if I am trained for any usefulness, it is for this. If seeing in my own nature all the evil that I ever saw, read of, or heard of in any others, will ease me of a contemptuous self-righteous spirit, then I am sure I am humbled and free from it. And I can have full freedom with none but such as see themselves the chief of sinners—like beasts and more like devils. If daily trials from some spirits or other will inure one to forbearance, and affect his spirit so as to dispose him to sympathize with the afflicted, surely I am the man. And I am happy to be trodden under foot, bruised and despised for Jesus's sake. Greater bliss and honour cannot be conferred on us. I am never so happy as when I am thus brought under the feet of all men, being despised by some and censured by others. I am willing, seeing the selfish, devilish nature of fallen man, to be reckoned as the off-scouring of all things. I stand amazed, bow, and wonder and adore an incarnate God. Seeing myself, brother Edwards, and all our weak brethren complete in Him, I sing and rejoice in the midst of all, and most heartily subscribe myself, my dear John, your sorrowful, yet rejoicing, unhappy, yet happy brother and fellow-sufferer,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

In the summer of 1747 Mr. Harris makes another of his rounds through the counties of South Wales. In the month of October he receives the gratifying news, at an Association held at Trevecca, that the work was spreading in every direction. After this he accomplished a round of five hundred miles amongst the mountains and valleys of North Wales, in the face of cold, rain, and storm, and in daily expectation of imprisonment or violence.*

In the spring of the following year, another remarkable gathering took place at Harris's home. The Countess of Huntingdon had a decided preference for the Welsh Reformers

* Trevecca MSS.

and the party of Whitfield generally, on account of her concurrence with them on matters of doctrine, and was in particular influenced by the preaching of Harris, whose ministry she attended at the Tabernacle in London. About the month of May, 1748, her Ladyship, who was accompanied by her daughters, and by Lady Anne and Lady Frances Hastings, was met at Bristol by Mr. Howell Harris, Mr. Griffith Jones, Mr. Daniel Rowlands, and Mr. Howell Davies, all of whom joined her on her projected tour into the Principality. "They appear to have travelled slowly, taking short stages every day. For fifteen days successively, two of the ministers that accompanied her Ladyship preached in some town or village through which they passed, by which means the seed of divine truth was widely scattered over a large extent of country. In Cardiganshire, her Ladyship was visited by the Rev. Philip Pugh, a dissenting minister, eminent for his piety, diligence, and success. On their arrival at Trevecca, in Breconshire, they were joined by several of the awakened clergymen, particularly Mr. William Williams, Mr. Thomas Lewis, and Mr. Penry Baillie, Mr. John Powel, and Mr. Thomas Jones. Also by some of the exhorters, or lay-preachers, and some pious and laborious dissenting ministers, amongst whom Mr. John Watkins, Mr. Lewis Jones, of Glamorganshire, and Mr. Lewis Rees, from North Wales, were the most notable. Her Ladyship remained a few days at Trevecca, which, exactly twenty years after, became her chief residence and scene of action. Whilst there, they had preaching four or five times a day, to immense crowds who had collected from all the adjacent country. 'The divine influence of the Spirit of God,' says Lady Frances, 'was very evidently afforded with His Word, and many were added unto the Lord's people.' "* That such a gathering should take place in the secluded spot where Harris had commenced the work as an obscure youth thirteen years before, was certainly a triumph for the cause

* "The Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," i. 84.

he had at heart; and, distinguished as the gathering was by the merging of ecclesiastical and denominational differences into one spiritual harmony, it certainly testifies to the depth of the awakening, and approached the ideal of what Harris endeavoured to make it, namely, a national revival of religion, and not the creation or resuscitation of a sect.

Accompanying her ladyship and Mr. Howell Davies, Harris arrived in London June 15. After a fortnight's evangelistic tour in the counties of Kent and Essex, he returns again to the Metropolis, and on July 2 writes to Mr. James Beaumont, relating in a part of his letter his experience in the following terms:—"O my dear brother, we are brought to an infinite eternity of love, light, and glory. We are clothed with love, we feed on love, we drink daily the fountain of love, we see nothing but love before, behind, within, and without, in time and to all eternity; let this appear in all our steps. O how am I ashamed that so little of the condescension and kindness and bowels of this love appears in all my conduct, especially towards the weak lambs of the precious flock."

Mr. Harris was now making active preparations for the return of his friend Whitfield from America, and in common with the Countess of Huntingdon was looking forward to his arrival with great anticipation. Mr. Whitfield had been absent from England four years. During the greater part of that time the burden of responsibility at the Tabernacle, and in the English Calvinistic Associations generally, rested upon the capable shoulders of Harris. At his departure Mr. Whitfield had committed the oversight of the Tabernacle to Mr. John Cennick; but at an Association held at the place in 1745 Mr. Cennick announced his determination of joining the Moravians,* and then delivered up the care of the Tabernacle to Harris. The secession of so important a co-adjutor as Mr. Cennick, who ranked amongst the orators of the Revival, and who at his departure carried several of the preachers

* Trevecca MSS.

and societies along with him, as well as troubles that arose in connection with others of the exhorters, was necessarily the source of considerable agitation. Some of the societies given over to the Moravians objected to the arrangement, and requested the Tabernacle preachers to revisit them. This request was discussed at an Association held in Bristol March 7, 1746, and Mr. Howell Harris in consequence wrote to the Brethren at Fetter Lane with a view to promote a common understanding in reference to their respective fields of labour. The letter which Harris wrote was, like himself, full of affection and meekness; but the answer of James Hutton, the imperious head of the Moravians, was arrogant and offensive, at the same time that it was respectful to Mr. Harris personally. "It is for the sake of Mr. Howell Harris that we answer you at all. For him we have regard; but with the rest of you we cannot have any kind of fellowship at all."

The difficulty of keeping the Tabernacle and its societies together under the severe strain must have been exceedingly great, but the management was in capable hands. "I was glad to find," wrote Whitfield to Harris, from America, Nov. 16, 1746, "I was glad to find that the Tabernacle was given up to your care. Whether its breaches are yet repaired, or whether it be entirely fallen down, I do not know."* And again, writing from Bethesda in December, he says, "Blessed be God for the good effected by your ministry at the Tabernacle, of which I have been informed by letters from Herbert Jenkins and Thomas Adams. The good Countess hath been there frequently, and much pleased, I am told. She shines brighter and brighter every day; and will yet, I trust, be spared for a nursing mother to our Israel. This revives me, after the miserable divisions that have taken place amongst my English friends. I trust the storm is now blown over, and that the little flock will enjoy a calm."

In the space of a few months from the date of the last

* "Life of Whitfield," by Tyerman, ii. 158-9, 167.

extract some further troubles arose. At an Association held in London. July 1, 1747, it was agreed, amongst other things, "That Simms, Whitfield's agent, give his office of keeping the books and accounts into Harris's hands." Matters, however, continued to make progress. Writing to Whitfield from London, December 17, 1747, Harris says, "It is now two years since the Brethren left us, and now I trust the wound is near healing. On Sabbath days the Tabernacle is quite crowded, and on week-days morning and evening there is a goodly company. A spirit of love and simplicity runs through the whole body."* Mr. Harris then proceeds to give further particulars relating to the Tabernacle and the English Association; he also mentions as coming under his vigilance the house and garden belonging to Whitfield at Abergavenny, and concludes by alluding to a matter of £200 that had been raised for the Orphan House in Georgia, and which, from another of Harris's letters still amongst his manuscripts at Trevecca, we learn "are here (in London) owing to such a person that Mr. Whitfield does not care to see England till they are paid." Referring to that item in his letter to Mr. Whitfield, Harris enumerates the sums that had been raised in the Tabernacle towards meeting it, "so that," he adds, "with what we shall do under God in the country in England and Wales, your way will be clear enough to come as soon as you possibly may." It was some months after this before Mr. Whitfield returned. He landed at Deal on the 30th June, 1748; but the interest evinced by Mr. Harris in the general affairs of the Calvinistic Methodists in England, and in the success of the Tabernacle, as well as in what was personal to his friend, is an ample justification of an entry in Harris's journal which says, "Mr. Whitfield returned after an absence of four years, and I had kept the door open in England for him."

One of the first acts of welcome accorded Mr. Whitfield

* Trevecca MSS.

was an invitation conveyed through Mr. Harris to visit the residence of the Countess at Chelsea, where he preached twice, and was invited again, as several of the nobility desired to hear him. He arrived in London six days after his landing, and at an Association held there July 20th, when Harris was also present, began to assume his recognized authority as Moderator by "opening his mind" upon several subjects. He did not however continue in authority. In accordance with a resolution he had formed of having nothing more to do with the planting of societies, and of devoting himself exclusively to the work of an evangelist at large, it was agreed at an Association held in London, April 27, 1749, that "Harris should take the oversight of the Tabernacle and other English Societies and preachers, and that Whitfield should do all he can to strengthen the hands of Harris and others, consistent with his going out preaching the Gospel at home and abroad." * Mr. Harris had acted the part of a chief during the four years' absence of Mr. Whitfield in America; but now that the position of Moderator is authoritatively conferred upon him he is the acknowledged leader of the Association in England, as well as the founder and head of all the Methodists in Wales. As a further tribute to his piety and wisdom, and to that indifference to all consequences with which he was ever ready to place his shoulder under burdens that required almost superhuman strength to bear, as well as to the expansiveness of his heart and sympathy, it may be mentioned that a rumour was circulated that Mr. Wesley also contemplated a step similar to that of Whitfield. The first week in August, 1749, Harris, Whitfield, and both the Wesleys meet in conference at Bristol for the purpose, Mr. Tyerman † conjectures, of bringing about the amalgamation of Wesley's and Whitfield's societies. The conference came to nought, but the respec-

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, chap. ix.

† "Life of Whitfield," by Tyerman, ii. 230.

tive chiefs drew nearer to each other, as we find that both Whitfield and Harris preached in Mr. Wesley's chapel at the Old Foundry, London, in January, 1750. It was with reference to this occasion Wesley observed concerning Harris, that he was "a powerful orator, both by nature and grace; but owing nothing to art or education."* A few months later in the same year, Harris received a letter from which we infer, not only that the idea of outward union was not extinct, but the prominent part that was borne by Harris in those peace-making negotiations. The letter was dated June 29, 1750, and was written from Camelford, Cornwall, by the Rev. George Thomson, vicar of St. Gennys, in that neighbourhood, and from the first a hearty friend of the Methodists. The writer says:—

"My dear Sir,—We have a strong report hereabouts that Mr. John Wesley has given up all his societies to you, and that you have actually taken charge of them. This report causes great searching of hearts, and gives birth to many warm debates. I dare say if the matter is as 'tis industriously reported there will be few found who will arraign Mr. Wesley's judgment, or refuse to act in concert with you."†

In giving the preceding particulars, we have violated somewhat the order of time; and must now return to the Principality, the chief place of Harris's labours and care. Coming down to his native country in the month of August, 1748, a few weeks after the return of Whitfield from America, Harris found things in an agreeable condition. "Wales," he writes, "is like the garden of the Lord; many are awakened, and fresh doors are opened. All the ministers and exhorters go on heartily, and the presence and power of the Lord are still more manifest. Hasten thy winged motion, O glorious

* "Life of Wesley," by Tyerman, ii. 68.

† Trevecca MSS.

day! when I shall see Paul and Barnabas, Luther and Calvin, and all the saints, joining in one song, and not so much as remembering that they ever differed. I have lately, at their own request, discoursed three or four times before several gentlemen, ladies of fashion, some magistrates, counsellors, attorneys, and doctors in divinity, and they behaved well. I have been all round South Wales, travelling often twenty, and sometimes thirty miles a day, and preaching twice, besides settling and conferring with the societies everywhere. I am about to begin a round through North Wales, where I expect to be sent home, or at least imprisoned. For ten days my life will be in continual danger.”*

The prodigious exertions, persecutions, and successes of the memorable tour through North Wales, are recounted in the following letter to Mr. Baddington, written the week Mr. Harris returned to Trevecca.

“ Oct. 20, 1748.

“ My dearest Brother,

“ I am glad to find by yours that you are come to the Fountain; may you there abide for ever. O stand fast in your liberty; many begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh. Are you so surprised at my silence? Did you but take a turn with me for two or three months, and see my labours and trials, and especially could you take a turn through my heart, your surprise would cease. However, I will inform you. It is now about nine weeks since I began to go round South and North Wales, and this week I came home from my last journey round North Wales. I have visited in that time thirteen counties, and travelled mostly one hundred and fifty miles every week, and discoursed twice every day, and sometimes three or four times a day. And in this last journey I have not taken off my clothes for seven nights, and travelled from one morning to the next evening without any rest above

* Tyerman's "Wesley," i. 535.

a hundred miles, discoursing at midnight, or very early, on the mountains, being obliged to meet at that time to avoid persecution. One man was obliged the week before I went there to pay £20, near Wrexham, to Sir W. W. Wynne; several of the hearers five shillings, and one man ten shillings, who had paid before, this being the third time the poor people have been served thus in that neighbourhood for assembling together. Last time there was only one of our brethren went to pray with some of the neighbours in the family; Sir William triumphed over the poor people and said, 'We have sent for law against them,' but could find none. Lord, answer for Thyself, and appear in Thine own cause. I had in another place, near the town of Bala, where I was formerly like to be murdered, a blow on my head near violent enough to slit my skull in two, but I received no hurt. I never saw such crowds coming to hear, nor more glory among the people; many hearts and doors have been lately opened. We know of several who have been awakened lately, and the Lord seems to turn His face towards the rich; several of them have been this journey to hear me, and several more speak with affection of coming to hear Mr. Whitfield when he comes. Pray remember me most affectionately to all the brethren. I am yours, most happy for ever,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

Mr. Harris, in conjunction with Mr. Whitfield, immediately reported the conduct of the persecuting baronet to the Countess of Huntingdon; her ladyship in turn laid the matter before the Government, and to the no small mortification of the haughty persecutor, the fines he had exacted were ordered to be returned. He vowed, however, to take ample revenge upon every Methodist in Denbighshire; but before the lapse of many months he fell from his horse and was killed.* "You heard," wrote Harris to Whitfield, "of the miserable end of

* "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 109.

that great opposer, Sir Watkin Williams Wynne; may this make us and all our opposers tremble with cries and tears. I believe that great glory is at the door; and woe be to all opposers in the Church or in the world that shall stand before Him when He cometh in His dyed glorious garments to judge poor sinners."

It was this year, 1748, and probably during the journey referred to, that Harris visited Denbigh. He stood near a barn on the outskirts of the town, and attempted to preach against the sins of the place; but a number of the fiercest ruffians created great confusion, and with curses and oaths declared that such proceedings were not to be tolerated. The personal danger of some of the early Methodists in this town was at one time so great that an action at law was brought against the ring-leaders of the persecution, and when the case was thrown out by the grand jury at Ruthin on the plea that the accusation originated in malice, the godless crew knew no bounds to their exultation. Returning to Denbigh they displayed favours upon their garments, set the church bells ringing, paraded the town in front of an effigy of Harris, which they had perched on an emaciated horse, screaming at the same time that the Reformer was defeated; and then, as a climax to their revelry, set their man of straw on fire to indicate the total extinction of Harris and his hated cause.*

Several other incidents connected with journeys to North Wales which Harris took at different times are related by the historian of Welsh Methodism. Near the town of Amlwch, in Anglesea, he preached standing on a table in the house of William Roberts, shoemaker. At Capel Coch he addressed his audience in a field belonging to one Robert Davies, and was greatly hindered by every imaginable discord his opponents kept producing in order to drown his voice. The owner of the field was a man of powerful frame, and of his own choice accompanied Harris to other parts of the county

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," vol. i. 152; ii. 126.

to afford him protection. He was with him at Gareg-lefn, but had no occasion for muscular display, as the meeting passed off without disturbance, Harris refreshing himself after the exhaustion of the service with the only provision available, which was barley bread and butter-milk. The familiarity of his figure at this period, as he made his incessant visits to every corner of Wales, is implied in the following drivel, the product, probably, of one of the drunkards who made him their song in the public houses :—

“ Howell Harris on his horse
From Llanerchymedd to Llan-y-gors,
And from thence to Gareg-lefn.”

In the parish of Llanllugan, Montgomeryshire, there lived a wealthy and influential gentleman of the name of Devereaux, who was a bitter opponent of the Revival, and had successfully broken up a meeting previously held by John Evans, of Cil-y-cwm, one of the exhorters, by inciting the mob to besmear him with dirt and pelt him with stones. This fierce opponent attended Harris's meeting with the same design, but failed of his purpose on account of the power accompanying the ministry, which was such that men screamed out as if with the terrors of the last day. The converts of this meeting soon formed themselves into a society, and, in default of obtaining a building, used to assemble for worship beneath the branches of a tree. One of their number was a young man of the name of Jeremiah Williams, who for the remaining fifty years of his life did service to the cause in the capacity of a preacher.

As the town of Llanidloes was the nearest of the North Wales towns to the home of Harris, it would naturally receive a great deal of his attention. It would be the first he would pass through on his journey to the north, and the last to hear his voice on the homeward return. The quietness of his first reception has previously been related ; but subsequent visits down to the year 1750 were more boisterous. Once he entered

the place and stood on a plot of ground to the south of the town, his horse meanwhile being stabled by one John Marpole. His hearers were few; but the idlers and drunkards of the neighbourhood soon got scent of what was going forward, and gathering round, set up such an uproar that Harris was fain to remount without rest or refreshment of any kind. On another occasion he went there to preach, but was opposed by one Robinson, an exciseman, who collected all the young arabs of the streets to yell around the preacher. The noise of the youngsters, excited by the pence of the exciseman, was so loud that not a word could be heard, and Harris again took his departure, just in time to escape being scalded by boiling water brought from the neighbouring tavern, The Lion. Another time when he preached at Llanidloes, he was fortunate in obtaining a hearing. The mob still raged and foamed, but a ruffian, by name Richard Glover, a man of herculean strength and the bully of the neighbourhood, being touched by the inequality of the contest—one man attacked by many—stood by the preacher to protect him, and challenged anyone to interfere with the laws of “fair play.” Once, when Harris discoursed near the old Market House, a man of respectable appearance responded to every statement he made by giving him the lie direct, while the rabble kept pelting with mud and rotten eggs; and again, on another occasion, when he addressed the people from the steps by the house of one John Lewis, a termagant of the town who had been primed with intoxicants and armed with a sickle, came forward threatening, as she said, that she would split the preacher in two; and then, by way of illustration, circled her weapon and severed with one blow the back of a dog. The owner of the dog was naturally incensed at his loss, and felled the virago to the ground with his fist, which had such a sobering effect that the moment she regained her feet she went away from the meeting in a great hurry, and left Mr. Harris to discourse in peace.

The activity and courage displayed by the great Welsh Reformer in the midst of his dangers was such that the annals of heroism have hardly many parallels. He faced his foes with the most dauntless intrepidity ; and in summoning others to the fray, he did so in the rousing term of a general stirring up his forces on the eve of a mighty battle. The fire and force of the following letter might well have been employed amidst the clang of war :—

“ January 14, 1749.

“ My dear fellow-soldiers,

“ I received a letter last week from you which I snatch the first moment I have to answer. Can I forget my dearest brother, who is not only born of the seed royal, but also engaged in the same war and sent out on the same errand ? Let earth, hell, sin, and Satan combine, thou man of God, thou captain of the living God, reach forth thy hand, and in the strength of the Most High we will wade through the waters, trample on scorpions, triumph in flames, rejoice and leap over every wall, enter and possess the good land of promise. Go on, thou herald of the Lord of Hosts, stir up thyself; the Lord God Omnipotent, the glorious Almighty Jesus, reigns over all worlds, even the world of sin and corruption ; He rules, yea overrules and terminates the great ocean, gives it command, and lo, it obeys him. I freely put my shoulders under my dear brother's burdens, according to the small measure of grace given, and rejoice in his present hour because it is a sure token of your future usefulness and fresh approaching glory ; Hallelujah !

“ To arms, to arms, my brother ! cry aloud, spare not, tread down the foe like a mighty conqueror ! Let him know thy command has to it heaven's broad seal, that thy weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God ; rejoice and sing in the midst of all, for all is well, all is yours. I am now setting out on a round for above a month, which prevents my writing to our dear brothers, Adams, Edwards, Stephens, and

Meredith. Read this if you please to them, with my heartiest and inmost love in the boundless ocean of Jesus's precious blood. There I am with kindest respect to all the society, and especially all the brethren that meet in conference, most heartily theirs and yours eternally in Him that lay in the manger, and now reigns on high.

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

The foregoing martial epistle was the production of one who himself shrank from no danger, and evaded no toil. He stood alone for courage, as he did for endurance, and in all things depended upon the Divine support. Referring to his hardships and perils, particularly in Wales, though he had laboured much in England, and persistently declined invitations to Scotland and Ireland, he writes :—

“I should not have mentioned these things so particularly had I not feared that I might rob God of the glory due to Him for helping me thus far ; and here I must raise my Ebenezer. I am, at writing this in the year 1749, thirty-five years of age, twenty one of which I spent in vanity, and the last fourteen years I was called by our Lord, and followed the Lamb of God.

“My good Lord, as I have already said, gave me without premeditation the necessary light, utterance, and bodily strength instantaneously whenever I was to discourse. He enabled me seven years to do this, mostly out of doors in all weathers every day, very few excepted, generally three or four times, and frequently five times ; to ride from eight to twenty Welsh miles (twenty of which are equal to thirty English miles) and upwards, over hills and dangerous places, through floods, ice, and snow, and He preserved me that I never received any material hurt, though I often fell from my horse.

“I do not write this as a rule for others to copy after, but

as a relation of simple truth concerning what the Lord had done in carrying me on hitherto ; and therefore I leave it to Him to use what I shall write as He shall please."

The only other incident relating to this period that claims attention is the death of Harris's mother. The intelligence reached him on January 7th, 1750, while he was at the Gore, Radnorshire. He immediately hastened back to Trevecca, and was greatly affected when he saw the corpse, and heard what her last words had been. He placed, however, a powerful restraint upon his affection, and at the funeral on the 9th discoursed from the words, " O Death, where is thy sting? "—an act which in inferior and less devoted men would have been regarded as a breach of the proprieties of mourning, but which in him was the pardonable merging of a natural attachment into a higher and more absorbing passion.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RUPTURE

I N the previous chapter the great efforts put forth by Mr. Harris to preserve the unity of the spirit between the diverging Wesleyan and Calvinistic sections of the English Methodists have been detailed, as well as his untiring exertions in keeping down the restlessness caused amongst the latter by the departure to the Moravians of the powerful John Cennick. Concurrent with those exertions, and overshadowing them in the severity of their tension, was the controversy that raged in Wales between Harris and some of those who hitherto had been his ardent admirers and assistants. That controversy resulted from his belief that on a particular doctrine he had been the subject of a special manifestation. From the commencement of his career he had been more or less of a mystic, and now he avows a communication from heaven direct on one of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. One of the singular coincidences that will unaccountably happen was, that about the same time he received a letter from his friend, the Rev. William McCulloch, of Cambuslang, Scotland, desiring his well-considered opinion as to "the leading of the Spirit, the assistance of the Spirit in prayer and preaching, praying in faith for a particular mercy, impressions, and impulses, and immediate revelations." The theme on which Harris was supernaturally enlightened is referred to thus :—

"In the year 1743 the glory of the Divinity of Jesus Christ

was more deeply impressed in my soul than ever. The more I meditate on that text, 'Great is the mystery of godliness : God was manifest in the flesh' (1 Tim. iii. 16), the more the glory thereof shineth on my soul. I had also much help to see more of the glory and wonders of the Divinity of Christ by reading a tract called 'A Sling and a Stone.' I now was brought to see more and more wonders in His infinite incarnation, life, blood, death, and resurrection, with all the glory of His offices ; and also the glory of His Church as being related to such a glorious Person. She is called His spouse, temple, family, army, and his fulness. But yet I was not insensible of the workings of self, that set itself up against all His offices, but I had a more visible view of it in my soul. By those discoveries which I had gradually of Him and of myself I was led to find that every truth when revealed by his spirit is practical, and will have its proper influence on the soul by humbling the sinner and exalting the Saviour. And as the glory of God displayed in our nature its Divine rays thus on my soul I felt it increased my faith, and my love became more habitual, my joy more solid, my resignation more entire, my spirit more smooth and quiet, and more bowels of compassion towards poor sinners. I now also learn to understand several Scriptures which I could not spiritually apprehend before ; and what I saw and understand in other Scriptures before I now come to see a much greater depth and more glory in ; every moment of time also became very precious in my sight ; and all the mis-spent time, talents, mercies, and gifts that were not employed by the Lord and for the Lord were not only lost but employed against Him."

It is not to be supposed that in the foregoing section Harris intends that he had been the recipient of a new truth, but simply that new light entered his mind on the lines of opinions already entertained. But that light came with such an impetuous glare, and brought the truth out in such contrast to

his former conceptions that in his own mind it seemed like an immediate revelation, and the subject became from this moment his all-absorbing theme.

It is possible that the zeal with which Harris now made the Divine glory of Christ the burden of his ministry was stimulated by the prevailing ignorance of his converts upon the subject. The preaching of his colleagues, and his own in particular, had hitherto been confined to matters of an alarming character, and dwelt so exclusively on the evil of sin and the pains of hell and damnation as to admit of little room for what was more advanced and edifying. Mr. John Evans, of Bala, early converted under Harris's ministry, informed the Rev. Thomas Charles that for five years he and others were members of a Methodist Society and yet scarcely knew anything in a theological sense of the person of Christ; and when any preacher did refer to the doctrine he was but little understood. And even Harris himself bewails the prevailing ignorance upon so essential a theme. "At this time I was continually grieved by the thick darkness and spiritual ignorance of many professors in the mystery of our Saviour, and by the selfishness and carnality of others who were favoured with great views of His humanity and glory, and the impatience of these different spirits with each other. Seeing all this, my spirit often longed to finish my work and to quit the troublesome stage of this life to be with my dear Saviour in the land of peace."

But in addition to ignorance, Mr. Harris had positive error to combat. In the year 1729 a dispute, known as the "Great Arminian Controversy," began to rage in Wales, and produced disastrous effects upon the minds of several Dissenting ministers and Churches. The majority of the young men who studied for the ministry, under the tuition of Mr. Perrot, at Carmarthen, became open advocates of Arminian or rather Pelagian sentiments, and from the year 1735, up to which time there was but one church in the Principality professing

those sentiments, the number of Arminian Churches began to increase, so that by the year 1742 there were six or seven influential ministers and congregations that had embraced those views, greatly to the detriment of Puritan seriousness and morals;* and in the course of a few years further other ministers and churches, amongst whom were some of Harris's former converts and friends, had adopted the same tenets. Mr. Harris was fully alive to the danger from the spread of those doctrines, and early mentions Arians and Socinians as those whom he opposed; he was, moreover, at one time, previous to the estrangement between them, anxious that Mr. Edmund Jones, of Pontypool, should settle in Carmarthenshire, so that his influence might counteract the Arminianism of that county.

It is hardly conceivable that any of Harris's Methodist friends could take exception to the preaching of so orthodox a doctrine as the Divinity of Christ, however persistently indulged in. But in addition to maintaining that Christ was God, and that He was the Supreme God in all the relations of His life, sufferings, and death, he passed on by a natural transition to affirm that God had suffered and God had died. In expressing himself thus he was following the example of Scripture in attributing to the one person of Christ the acts that belong to either His human or His Divine nature, and was far from intending the irreverent notion that the Divine nature in Christ was subject to expiry. "The Divine nature," he writes, "was living, glorious, great, and eternal in death. Death annihilates nothing; it broke the unity only between the body and soul of Christ." But the bold form in which Harris presented the truth, and the overwhelming force with which he urged it, led to his being misunderstood and contradicted. "As my spirit increased more and more in beholding the glory of that God-man, whom I now beheld clearly the wonder of all worlds, the terror of devils, the

* "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," by Thomas Rees, 2nd edition, chapter iv.

delight of angels, and the real and only hope of poor sinners, then I began to find great and strong opposition to my preaching His God-head and death, especially in Wales. This opposition gained ground, and I began to be openly opposed, and that also by many that once called themselves my spiritual children."

The first public notice taken of the subject was in July, 1745. In his letter to the Rev. C. Wesley, dated the 16th of that month, Harris says, "Last week we had a meeting of ministers and others who assist in the work. The Lord was indeed among us. The breach that was likely to be made is, I trust, effectually stopped, the brethren that were for disputing being satisfied. Brother Rowlands had gone to England and could not return to us." The absence of Mr. Rowlands from the assembly may account for the readiness of the brethren present to accept the explanations Mr. Harris had to offer; for, sad as it is to have to relate as an example of the coolness that may arise between holy and eminent men, the leader of the opposition was his own revered friend from Llangeitho. For the present we have no pronouncement from Rowlands upon the subject; but the letters of Harris contain hardly anything else, and furnish by their ecstatic adorations an ample insight into what must have been the glow of his public utterances. Writing to a friend, from London, Jan. 3, 1746, he says,—

"Dear Sir,

"I trust our Saviour, our dearest Lord and God, does continue to draw your heart from the spirit of the world to His dear self. O, it is our happiness to be raised out of the vices and principles, and hopes and fears of this world, so as to see that it can make us neither miserable nor happy. Dear Jesus, O thy condescension, thou incarnate God! How can I behold him in a manger who fills all heaven with His glory! My God, my Saviour, why are we not continually ravished

with thy love? Here is room for a noble mind to employ its deepest thoughts in reviewing the height and depth of this unfathomable mystery. Here let our hearts be found, whilst the wordly mind is busied and perplexed about its toys and fooleries. Dear Sir, this is happiness indeed, to be inwardly acquainted with Him that bled and died on the tree. I doubt not but your prayers for and indefatigable labours with your family, are made successful; and if difficulties should arise be not discouraged; all hearts are in the hands of Him whom you serve; the eternal Spirit can soon wound and soon heal, cast down the most lofty imaginations, and soon reveal the great atonement for the remission of our sins. Has not God given you an earnest for good already? Let faith and patience have their perfect work. They that feel the Saviour's love will not be offended. Dear Sir, I greatly long once more to see and tell you what grand things the great God is doing on the earth. O what mercy it is that we should be born in these days of Gospel light! Therefore let us be all on the stretch for God whilst these golden opportunities are in our hands.—I am, dearest Sir, more heartily than ever, yours most humbly and affectionately in our dear Lord Jesus,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

At another Association, held at Glyn, January 8, 1746, Harris, Rowlands, W. Williams, and H. Davies being present, the subject of controversy was again introduced, but this time in another of its aspects. It would seem to be a point in Harris's theology that the Divinity of Christ shed its glory on His human nature, and exalted that nature to such an unparalleled degree that on account of its assumption into the Divine it was entitled to a community of honour and worship. In one of the entries in his journal he mentions a sermon he preached, in which he dwelt upon “the union in Christ between the two natures; then the ineffable glory of His humanity, how He not only purged all originals in out of

it, but filled it with the Divine nature, so that every hair of his head, every look, every word, and every atom of nature was full of glory;" and again we find him writing of Christ as the "Wonderful Man," and "The Man who is the Eternal God." The position he took upon the subject was misunderstood even by his friend Daniel Rowlands, who subsequently charges him with holding the theory of Ubiquitarianism, or the Omnipresence of the humanity of Christ; but at the Assembly referred to the topic was brought forward by one brother Edwards, who by asking whether Mr. Harris meant that "the manhood of Christ was an object of worship," and other questions of a like import would seem to imply that Harris advocated a separate worship for the human nature of Christ, and on being enlightened "confessed that he mistook Mr. Harris's meaning, is sorry for offending him, and is convinced that he has done wrong in proposing a question to the staggering of many Christians."

The atmosphere being cleared by this timely explanation, Mr. Harris is once more free for a time to exalt and bring others to worship the Person whose glory he had now seen, and marvellous were the effects upon those who heard him discourse. "At an Association held at Trevecca, January 25, 1746," says a manuscript among his remains, "we talked a little of the mystery of Christ's person—the Godhead and Manhood. Such was the power among us that from the time Mr. Harris began preaching at twelve at noon, we did not cease praising and singing and rejoicing in the Lord till twelve at night."

In less than a month from the last date Mr. Harris is again in London, whence he writes the following to Mr. Thomas James, of Builth:—

"February 22, 1746.

"Dear Brother,

"How is it with and among you? I was in hope of a line, but I trust our Saviour is leading you by the hand and show-

ing you more of the glory and mystery of His Person, so as to transform you into His likeness. Are you in any trials inwardly or outwardly? Fear not; all is well; Jesus reigns and lives for ever; and you are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Let your faith still feed on His flesh and drink His blood, till you feel you are one with Him. Go on, then, highly favoured of the Lord; let not thy hands hang down or thy heart fail; the Lord of hosts is thy everlasting strength. Rejoice and make thy boast in Him all the day long. Remember me to dear S—; let her also be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Soon sower and reaper shall sit down together at the marriage supper of the Lamb and rejoice for ever. Let this suffice for the present.

“The Lord is with me in public and private work, and blesseth brother J. also. This is enough, to have Christ our Saviour in all. O the mystery that this man is God! He wept, travelled, bore cold, pain, hunger, and thirst, all reproach, shame, and all other miseries for me. My loving, everlasting Brother! Surely this Lord is love! My soul within me is lost in wonder, and melts like wax. O this love, this mysterious unfathomable love! May we never speak of it without a deep sense of the profound mystery on our souls. Amen. May the dear Saviour and his great love be ever before your eyes; then you will be willing to endure all things for his sake.

“In Him I am yours for ever,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

Mr. Harris informs us that in the year 1747 “the enmity grew stronger against the preaching of God’s humiliation and death; still I bore all in hopes of seeing this storm ceasing as I had seen many others.” His letters during this and the following two or three years seem to touch their most exalted strains, and soar so high as to leave the impression that if the cord of life that held him to this world were suddenly broken

he would find himself at once amongst the seraphs. A few of them are again given:—

“To. Mr. Thomas James.

“London, January 4, 1747.

“My dear, dear Tommy,

“I am sorely fatigued: it is near three in the morning, but I must tell my dear brother how dearly I love him and his. How is it with you all? Doth the vail wear off? and doth the glory of a crucified Saviour appear brighter and brighter? Oh, my brother, that Man is indeed the Eternal God. What views doth He give vile me of Himself at times! He shines brightly like the noon-day sun. As yet we know nothing of what shall be revealed. O, what heart of stone would not melt to see the Eternal God lying in the manger; sweating and tried; wearing His thorny crown; not opening His mouth, because He bore our sin and shame! O, my brother, where shall I begin or end? What shall I say but fall, and bow, and wonder! Go on, my dear brother, and be bold in the great mystery of God become a Man.—In Him I remain yours, most affectionately and heartily for ever,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“To the Rev. D. Rowlands.

“London, January 4th, 1747.

“My dear, dear Brother,

“I trust this shall find you viewing that great mystery, God made Man. Here we must come; this is the end of all knowledge, and the root of our happiness. O, my brother, here let us be for ever lost in wonder and amazement. Now in writing my soul melts within me, and I feel I long to leave this body of sin behind me to view this transforming sight. Will you call me Moravian or Antinomian? God forbid. It is the life of my soul, and no borrowed plume nor heated fancy, but my solid happiness. O that great Atonement!

When shall we be all lost in its infinite depths? Are there any that abuse this profound knowledge? It is because they have not the thing itself but the shadow. O that I had faith to abide in this light continually; then would I no longer be a servant to any sin or idol, but would shine in the image of God. O pray for me that I may have some faith, that I may know more of this wonder of all wonders, Christ crucified. But whither am I going; shall I be tempted that I offend my brother by this language? No, no; I know thee better, my dearest brother; methinks I rather see tears of adoration trickling down your face, crying, 'This is the one thing needful; I also want to know indeed that by this faith I may really become dead to sin and alive to God in all things.'

"Here are many gracious, growing, lively souls, and several are added lately.

"I am, my dearest brother and fellow-labourer, with heartiest respect to brother Williams, and all the brethren and societies, longing to see you all, yours in the best bonds for ever,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

"January 15, 1747.

"My dear Friend,

"I certainly thought it long to have no opportunity of sending you a line all this time; but I have often carried you on my heart to the Friend of Sinners. When I see the infinite care for us—God as the eternal Spirit has taken us for His charge—I can rejoice over the little scattered, weak, foolish, simple children, yea triumph in their behalf over all the designs of an inveterate enemy. When I see them engraven on the heart of the great High Priest and marked out by Him, and his infinite bowels yearn over them, I then break out into singing, and cry, 'Fear not, little flock; whatever lions, wolves or tigers come against you, they shall not devour you, because the Shepherd never slumbers nor sleeps.'

Go on, then, dear brother, be not discouraged at any seeming obstacle,—for as sure as faith is given it shall be tried,—but rejoice in tribulation, because the Lord is God. Remember thou art passed from death to life; thou art come to Mount Zion, and to the blood of sprinkling. O then let everything help to drive thee to thy own stronghold, the clefts of the smitten Rock, and there bathe thy soul continually in the running streams of a Saviour's infinite blood. Remember, every thorn we have in our flesh, every fall from God to self, proceeds from our slighting that fountain and our wandering from it, and growing self-sufficient, and losing the lively sense of our vileness and nothingness. O let everything help to bring us down to the dust at our Saviour's feet, to make us nothing before the Lord, that He may be truly honoured in us and by us in all His perfections, as one wholly entitled to our whole hearts, and to be the sole object of our trust and confidence, of our love, delight, and most pure obedience. Think what infinite condescension it is in Him to look at all on such vile, abominable worms as we are! O let us give Him the glory, for He is worthy. Stand amazed, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! What! is the great I AM become a Man? and is His delight with the children of men, and with the vilest of them, too? It is in this character alone I must address Him, and lay hold of His free love, and believe He is my God and Father. O Lamb of God, art Thou my husband and friend for ever? And didst Thou, O infinite Purity, see me in all my filthiness, and then come by me and say, 'Live, live'! And didst Thou then clearly see what a mystery of wickedness was nested up in my abominable, deceitful heart? And didst Thou then see what I should be, and yet not only adopt me into Thy family, but give me the honour of waiting on Thy Bride, bearing Thy name to the heathen, and for Thine own honour's sake, rather than turn me out of my honour and office, wouldest cover all my faults? O Lord, then shall not I be willing to wash the feet of all, and to be

for ever the servant of all, and be always Thy passive clay? Is not this the language of thy soul, my dear brother, as it is the language of mine? Remember, he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, saith the Lord. I trust then thou dost live in the experience of that great privilege, purchased for us, and entailed upon the whole family, to be granted us on making a proper, humble, confident demand of it, namely, a deliverance from the power of that tyrant, self-love and pleasure, and our own wills. To be shut up in the chains of this monster is the misery of all miseries; but O the happiness of this liberty to be able to say at all times, Not my will, but Thine be done. This we have experienced; let us then maintain our ground. I shall rejoice to hear of thy prosperity; also of our Saviour's work in thy soul, and how the little society goes on. Remember me most tenderly to them, and may we all be on our watch-tower, for all eyes are upon us, and, above all, the eyes of our Eternal Father and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Lord be merciful to us, poor sinners. I long to see you all, but am going from hence to Bristol. In the meantime let us meet at the throne of grace.

“I am, yours in the best bonds,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“Jan. 8, 1748.

“My dear and valued brother Edwards,

“O that I could write from the unfathomable Fountain, and tell you of the infinity of love's discoveries I there view. However, let me tell you that there I am, and there I feel a oneness with my brother, and long to be delivered from that which now lets and hinders. O that the world were filled with loud trumpeters, that everywhere did blaze abroad the Infinite Unsearchable I AM clothed with our nature. O help me to gaze and wonder. O infinite wonder! sin and satan, death and hell lie vanquished, subdued, removed out of the way. Courage, believer; let us go on, my dear brother;

let us share Caleb and Joshua's blessing ; though few will believe, let us still cry, it is possible the Lord lives. The Lord God Jehovah in the manger ! O that as the Lamb reveals more of His glory to us we may be more indeed transformed to His compassionate tender-heartedness. I trust that by all means together He is determined to bring me to the dust, so that I may be willing to be whatever He would have me, and to become all things to all men. O when shall I, who am the least of all saints in this grace, confess in my inmost soul this infinite honour given me of doing somewhat in the Universal Monarch's royal family, and to wait on this indeed glorious and immortal Bride. What great things are spoken of Thee, O thou city of God. 'Tis then well when we can indeed become weak to the weak, and to the Jew a Jew, and to such as are under the law as under the law—all things indeed to all men that we may indeed win some.

"The enemies rage against the poor lambs of Christ. May we have unwearied patience to bear all insults, hardships, and difficulties for the poor flock's sake, and count it our highest privilege to be worn out with labours and trials in the inward and outward man, and count it our greatest honour, as I am sure princes or angels would were they set in our place. O Infinite Father ! show us the infinitude of Thy love, and the infiniteness of our sin and ingratitude that we should be ever unwilling to do or suffer anything for Thee, who hast called us by distinguishing love to testify of Thee. A line from you shall, I trust, be sincerely and heartily acknowledged by the chief of all sinners, and indeed the least of God's family.

"Thine, my brother, in the mystery of godliness, for ever,
 "HOWELL HARRIS."

"To Mr. Gambold.

"London, July 2, 1748.

"My dearest Brother,

"I was refreshed by the receipt of your kind letter, and am

thankful to the great Prophet of the Church that leads you on in Divine light, and especially with every fresh discovery keeps your spirit humble before Him. It is the meek and lowly that He will continue to reveal himself to, and honour and erect in His kingdom. Every discovery given us by the Holy Spirit is worth millions of worlds. May you abide ever as clay in the hands of the great Potter, and you will see greater things than these. O my brother, we know nothing yet as we ought to know ; we are but babes, but we shall pry by faith into this infinite wonder, till we are swallowed up in light in viewing the incomprehensible Majesty, an Infinite Father, Infinite Son, Infinite Holy Spirit, mysterious Incomprehensible Three-One ! Infinite Majesty in our own nature. This shall be our study, and view, and contemplation, and bliss to all eternity. It is now a time of building the temple ; no wonder, then, if it is a time of confusion and much dust arising, and if there is much noise ; only let the labourers love one another, and mind their own work. Every member has its proper office. Blessed are the peace-makers, saith the Lord. We have more and more reason to think our Saviour has thoughts of love to this nation and Church ; he is carrying on his work several ways, and takes great steps. Let us bow and wonder ; let us fall down and adore, and cry, Thy kingdom come. Now in Him, with heartiest affection to all His friends about you, I remain, my dearest fellow-heir of all the promises and fellow-citizen of the New Jerusalem, yours, in our loving Immanuel, to all eternity,

“ HOWELL HARRIS.”

The last of the foregoing series of letters was written in London, and has no connection with the controversy raging, excepting as a further index to the warmth of Harris's spirit. The seat of that controversy was in Wales, and the principal in opposition to Harris was the eloquent Rowlands. To him, therefore, from the same place and upon the same date

another epistle is addressed, bearing directly upon the subject at issue. An extract from it runs as follows:—"My very dear brother Rowlands,—We have all grieved the Holy Spirit, who has so highly favoured us; and we have greatly provoked the Holy One of Israel to expose our nakedness. O my brother, it is well for us that He is God indeed over all, clothed with our nature. To the dust let us go, and fall low even to nothing. Let us recover our first love, and go forth united in our hearts, words, and actions."

Notwithstanding the tender and deprecatory tone of these last remarks, the breach, instead of closing, was daily becoming wider. Mr. Harris thought proper to charge those who opposed him with obscuring the glory of Christ and leaning towards Arianism, whereas the views he promulgated and the phraseology he employed appeared to Rowlands to demand a more public refutation. The latter accordingly issued a pamphlet upon the subject in the year 1749, with a second edition in 1750. It is written in the form of a dialogue between "Orthodox Methodist," supposed to represent Rowlands, and one "Erroneous," who stands of course for Harris. Being of no undue length and yet the fullest known exposition of the points of the debate, we append a translation:—

Orthodox.—All hail, my brother; I am pleased to meet you and to have this meeting for conversation. I hear that you and others bring false accusations against us by alleging that we are Arians.

Erroneous.—Quite true. I have said so, and I again—

Orth.—You do. Then how dare you maintain such a falsehood? We believe that Jesus Christ is true God, and that he is co-eternal, co-equal, and consubstantial with the Father.

Err.—I affirm that you are Arians, and I publish it to the world.

Orth.—What reprehensible conduct. Consider, I pray, who is the father of lies; for you are not only given over to believe what is false but you shamelessly proclaim it; and this is not the only particular in which you misrepresent us. May the Lord forgive you your evil report; and may you learn in future to confine yourselves to the truth. I am informed that you deny that there are three persons in the Godhead.

Err.—Three persons! I object to the term person; it sounds carnal, and I cannot adopt it.

Orth.—It has the sanction of Scripture—Heb. i. 3—and has been in use from the beginning. I judge it a sufficiently correct expression; but you are wiser than your ancestors. That there are three persons in the Godhead is evident from several passages in the inspired Book. Our Lord commands his disciples to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. St. John says that there are three that bear record in heaven, and these three are one. Athanasius also, and the Church of England, most worthily exhibit this great truth when they teach that the person of the Father is one, of the Son another, and of the Holy Ghost another: the Holy, blessed Trinity,—three persons and one God. But I hear that you contend for the Patripassian heresy. You declare that the Father as well as the Son became incarnate.

Err.—I do; it has been so revealed to me.

Orth.—Revealed! What revelation can be contrary to the revelation of the Scriptures? These teach that it was the *Word* who became flesh. It seems you are tainted with Patripassianism as well as with Sabellianism.

Err.—You can easily apply hard names; but this is what I believe,—that the Father as well as the Son was made flesh, suffered, and died. But pray, do you believe that God died?

Orth.—God is a spirit without body, parts, or passions; and as such he neither suffers nor expires. He is called the *immortal* God, and He cannot therefore cease to live.

Err.—I aver that God suffered and died.

Orth.—I believe that the second person in the Trinity, God the Son, assumed a human nature which became one with the Divine person in the God-man ; but the two natures are so distinct and distant that His *humanity* only tasted suffering and death. That humanity, however, being united to the Divinity, what Christ did and suffered was of such infinite merit that the Justice of God was satisfied for the sin of man. The following Scriptures prove conclusively that it was as to the human nature alone Christ died : “ Being put to death in the *flesh* ” (1 Peter, iii. 4) ; “ He was crucified through *weakness* ” (2 Cor. xiii. 4), that is, as he was a man ; “ Who his own self bare our sins in his own *body* on the tree.” (1 Peter, ii. 24.)

Err.—I hold that there is such a union between the two natures of Christ that God as well as man died.

Orth.—And so you have added Eutychianism to your other two heresies. I believe with Athanasius that our Lord Jesus is perfect God and perfect man, but one Christ ; and that not from confusion of substance but from unity of person : one, not from conversion of his divinity into flesh, but from the assumption of his humanity into God.

Err.—Does not the Bible set forth that the Word was made flesh ?

Orth.—The pious Bishop Beveridge, I think, elucidates this truth very clearly. “ When our Lord,” he says, “ took our nature upon him he became man as well God ; but the two natures were not made one but remained unconfounded. The two natures, therefore, being in themselves distinct, were yet united so as to constitute one person.” In my judgment to assert that God died or suffered, is fearful blasphemy. To renounce Christ as your mediator and advocate with the Father is Sabellianism ; to regard Christ’s body as omnipresent is Eutychianism.

Err.—I contend that the union between the two natures is such that where one is there the other is also.

Orth.—My Bible informs me that the body of Christ ascended to heaven, and must remain there until the time of restitution of all things. The Apostles' creed and yours do not agree. You have piled together an astonishing jumble of heresies. You are Antinomian, Sabellian, Patripassian, Eutychian, and Ubiquitarian all in one.

Err.—My opinion is that whatever Christ performed in one nature He did it in both ; He did nothing in one nature contrary to what He did in the other.

Orth.—Such being the case the Deity must have hungered, slept, and was subject to weakness,—a conclusion that amounts to shocking blasphemy. If what you assert is correct, namely, that what Christ did in one nature He performed in both, then Christ even as God could not foretell the time of the Day of Judgment ; He was therefore not omniscient, and consequently not perfect God. You now perceive which of us is the Arian.

Err.—I again declare to you that the things you are now gainsaying have been revealed to us ; and if you, instead of being guided by carnal reason had been truly enlightened, you would behold these glorious mysteries as they appear to us. In your benighted condition you cannot apprehend them.

Orth.—Granted that we are ignorant and in darkness, would you pass judgment on all our forefathers, the compilers of the Church Service, the good old Athanasius, and upon the whole body of orthodox divines ?

Err.—I see ;—you gather your knowledge from books ; for my part all books could be in flames. But pray, is it not your contention that the Deity forsook our Lord at his crucifixion ?

Orth.—I hear that you so represent me ; but it is only another of your mis-statements. What I say is, that God hid His face in such a way that the human nature was unsupported by the Divine, and hence the cry, “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ” Such was the desertion in my opinion ; but I believe that the personal union of the

two natures continues, and that our Lord was God-man in the womb, God-man on the Cross, and God-man in the grave. I will again once more implore you to confine yourself within the bounds of truth; and I would advise that instead of committing good books to the fire you should study them, and especially the best of books—the Bible. You would thus be delivered from your self-conceit, you would give over traducing and condemning others, and so far from being dominated by your present ungovernable spirit you would be restored to the old ways and be free from the degrading bias of your present heresies; and may God give you a good understanding in all things. Amen.*

The opinions attributed to Harris in the foregoing tractate, as well as the views he entertained of the teaching of his opponents, are all expressed in the words of Rowlands. There is no reason for complaining that Harris is unfaithfully portrayed; he certainly gave ground for the charges of Sabelianism and Patripassianism brought against him, by such phrases as "The Trinity in Christ," "All is in Him—Father, Son, and Spirit," which we find in his journal; but in proclaiming with uncompromising distinctness that Christ is the supreme God he had the convictions of orthodox Christians all on his side, and was only contending for a great truth,—which Rowlands possibly on account of the limited extent of his reading† was prone to disregard by confining the humiliation of Christ to his human nature,—when he went on further to affirm that this Infinite God humbled Himself by his obedience unto death, and so gave infinite merit to His passion and cross. Mr. Harris himself made no formal pronouncement, but his unrivalled letters are evidence of the unlimited scope he gave to faith and adoration. The following are further examples:—

* "Cofiant y Parch. D. Rowlands," by Morris Davies, p. 335.

† "Traethodau Llenyddol," by L. Edwards, D.D., p. 486.

“ To Mrs. Whitfield.

“ October 16, 1749.

“ My dear Sister,

“ I hope that by all means you are brought to the sacred blood of the Lamb of God. By this alone we are brought nigh, and make our robes white, and overcome our spiritual enemies ; it is by this alone the cistern of our hearts is cleared from the guilt, pollution, and power and sin. O infinite fountain, what would become of us were it not for this soul-cleansing and sin-destroying spring ! I trust the Lord Jesus is daily teaching you and subduing all your wisdom and will to His own, and making way for fresh manifestations of His glory in your soul. One view of Him in His eternal Godhead and in the Infinity of His Person, love, obedience, and sufferings, is worth millions of worlds. Who can set forth the riches of His death and the unfathomable abyss of His sufferings ? The inexpressible evil of sin appears here more clearly than if we saw all the misery of the damned. Here, had I more faith, I should see more of the fall, the glory of the covenant, the riches of grace, the perfection of God, the privileges of believers, the nature of the law, of sin, death, heaven, hell, and judgment, meet in the garden of Gethsemane and on Mount Calvary than all the wisdom and reasoning in the world could ever discover. Hither let us repair, my dear sister, and rest our souls here for ever. Here let us learn all our Christianity. This is the gate of heaven, the city of refuge, the eternal ark, the brazen serpent, the one thing needful we want to know. O come, my dear sister, let me take you by the hand and show you One, even Jesus, the eternal Word, the Lord JEHOVAH, groaning under the load of our sins, bearing them away in His own sacred body to eternal oblivion, drinking up the river of eternal wrath lying in the way, encountering with all hell in rescuing our souls from the jaws of the lion. O let us adore though we cannot comprehend ; let us bow before the Infinite Sufferer, and pray

that He would be pleased to turn the mysterious streams into our parched hearts, that we may become like a watered garden. It is here in tracing my dear Master and God in all the steps of His humiliation that I feel my pride subdued, my will broken, and my carnal wisdom nailed to the cross ; here I see the whole church, our Saviour's dear body, truly precious in all its parts to me, and see everything dangerous that comes as a vail between me and His glory. O my loving, my dear Eternal Father, I am ashamed that I have still so much of a Jewish heart that neither sees any glory in Thee, or in Thy death, or feels any of Thy infinite pain in my spirit. Certainly I deserve millions of hells for slighting Thy wounds and blood, for thinking and speaking of and feeding so little on Thee, Thou glorious sufferer. O my dear sister, we see but little of the evil of despising or forgetting this adorable fountain. O the great Atonement ! when all the hopes of this are so glorious, what must Thou thyself be ? If the shadows that were to vanish were of so great account, what must the substance be ? By this that infinite evil sin is removed, and we sinners are saved ; eternal torments, pungent plagues and curses are removed, and we the heirs of hell become heirs of heaven. If we were not stupid, hard, and very carnal, this would be the subject of our thoughts and conversation as well as of our preaching continually. Every mercy we enjoy, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, all come to us by this Door, and through a crucified Saviour, had we but spiritual eyes and ears to perceive and discern the valuableness of the atonement. I have been tedious, but I dare not excuse myself. I rather rejoice in the freedom of spirit I find, and as it comes from the heart I am persuaded it will go to the heart.

“ I am, yours for ever, in the spotless Lamb,

“ HOWELL HARRIS.”

“To Mr. T—— B——.

“October 16, 1749.

“Dear Brother,

“I thank you for yours, and was made glad for the least blessing attending the word dropping from my vilest lips to any; it is reward enough to be honoured if it were to speak but one word with a blessing in all our worthless life. I hope you are coming more and more into the clear light of God’s Holy Spirit out of nature’s darkness. Then you will see God himself clothed with our humanity and lying in all the forms of humiliation to exalt us to glory. It is our happiness to view this in His light; then we shall see heaven opened in Him, and every sin, with the fiery law and all its curses, with death and hell removed out of our way; and we that were heirs of hell now in Him made heirs of heaven, in everlasting glory and immortality kings and priests unto God. Such news as this, well understood by faith, will make brother T— cry Hallelujah again and again. Christ is worthy of all praise in heaven and on earth, for He hath redeemed us with His own precious blood.

“In Him I am yours, in the best bonds,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“To Mr. Cox.

“October 17, 1749.

“I often think of you with joy, because I see you are saved from all things here below, and building your nest in the cleft of the Rock, growing as a twig in the eternal Vine, living in His life, viewing endless glory in His bloody mangled Body, which many are so far from seeing altogether lovely, as white and ruddy, that they cannot bear to hear much of Him in that despised form. But let us mind the rock from whence we were hewn, and remember we were a rib taken out of His side, and whatever others think of the matter He is made of God unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; He is our life, hope, strength, and our all in all. Let

us adore Him in all the forms of His humiliation, in the manger, and on the cross when all despise Him, as well as on the throne; and confess indeed—we are witnesses of this—that His flesh is meat indeed to us, and His blood is drink indeed, and in Him we that were lost are found, and acquitted fairly from the curse and second death. Don't you see yourself so effectually saved in Him as if you had never sinned, nor had ever been a son of Adam, and an heir of hell? Amazing grace! Glorious salvation! enough to dazzle the eyes of all the angels! But so it is. I, the lost, damned rebel, am eternally saved, Hallelujah! Will you not affectionately remember me to your spouse and sister? Beg of them to plead their misery before our crucified Lord God Immanuel till He shows them heaven and eternal life opened on Mount Calvary, and they have the witness of it in their own souls by the Holy Spirit.

“Let me now subscribe myself yours affectionately in the loving Immanuel,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

“October 21, 1749.

“My dear Brother,

“How is it with your soul? Do you travel out of yourself indeed to the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you see your life as well as your righteousness, holiness, and strength, and wisdom out of yourself in Him? And does this view make and keep you indeed dead to yourself; and do you see you are no debtor to the flesh, but to Him who was dead, and is alive and lives for ever and ever? O my dear brother, do you see fresh glories in the Lamb of God? Does He appear altogether lovely indeed to you? Do you see that He is the mystery indeed, and that his name is called Wonderful? Do you see Him infinite in His birth and circumcision; infinite in all His obedience and humiliation, and especially in all His sufferings? And do you see in Him the way quite clear to the

Kingdom? O my brother, we are but babes in knowledge of this great mystery, God manifest in the flesh bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, swallowing up death, principalities and powers, and opening the Kingdom once more to poor sinners. O blaze abroad this good news whilst you have an opportunity; cry aloud, and spare not till the dead hear His voice and live; let not your light be hid under a bushel, nor your talent laid in the earth, nor your mouth be stopped. I am in hope once more to see you. O pray if I shall come I may come commissioned from on high to hold forth the glory of that salvation that was finished on Mount Calvary. This is my life and happiness. O Lamb of God, let this be my life, to behold Thy glory and to spread Thy fame, to eat Thy flesh, to bow and blush, and adore, and wonder before Thee. I can send you such news that it makes angels glad; the lost sheep are found, and prodigals return home, and the Gospel runs and is glorified, and will it not revive and rejoice your heart? Yes; I know it will.

“If I am not obliged to go to London soon I hope to see you before Christmas. In the meantime remember me heartily if you please to your spouse and the society; and be assured that because the Lord is God I am all yours, most affectionately and sincerely in Christ Jesus, though the Chief of sinners,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

The further progress of the dispute between Harris and Rowlands is related by Harris himself:—

“In January, 1750,” he writes, “I parted with my friends and brethren in London imploring them to attend to the Lord only, and to preach His Godhead and death with power to the hearts of the hearers as the only true foundation to build upon. In my coming down to Wales I saw and felt more than ever of the infinity of our Saviour in His birth, life and

sufferings ; the infinity of His law and gospel ; and the infinity of His pardoning grace and smiles, wanting nothing indeed but Him. I loved Him in all His works, but more especially in all the steps of His wonderful humiliation. I had such a view and sense that I should soon be to all eternity with Him, that though I longed for the happy time yet I saw a thousand years as nothing to wait for such a bliss.

“As the Lord himself sent me round the country at my first setting out and gave me a desire to please Him only and to speak plain truths, so at this time a necessity was laid upon me to preach that great truth which He revealed to my own soul, namely, the wonderful condescension and mystery of God in our nature reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their sins ; that He was God in the womb of Mary when he assumed our nature, laying in Himself the foundation of our salvation and deliverance, and was the Supreme God in His poor birth and swaddling clothes and in all His sufferings, that He was the great I AM, the Alpha and Omega, and that there is none other God but Him. There are three persons, but one God ; and those that worship another God besides Him do worship an idol, for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And when the time came to make an atonement for our sins, when He, the great sacrifice, was raised on the altar of the cross, all nature, earth, and hell, was in an uproar or confusion, the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the dead awoke and were raised that all might enquire, What is the cause and meaning of all this ?

‘Tis the MIGHTY MAKER Dies !’—*Dr. Watts.*

“I went on thus some years through Wales bearing my testimony to these truths in the face of carnal professors, Arians, and Socinians, who all railed against me. Although it proved an occasion of much murmuring, contention, and division, yet I am in a lively hope that the Lord will bless His own truths in his proper time, it may be when I am gone. I was then in great expectation that it would be my last work and

testimony. But at His feet I leave myself, together with my performances and labour; and to Him I commit myself also for the remainder of my life, knowing that He is able for the time to come to carry me through every trial, work, or suffering as He has done hitherto; and through His unchangeable grace to the chief of sinners I set up my Ebenezer. And though I know but little of Christ the Lord as I should, yet I am a living witness of His free grace, and of what is said of Him in the Scripture; therefore I could not refrain from inviting all to submit to His righteousness and government of grace, and to wait at His gate that they might be made happy for ever in Him, the only sure rest and shelter for poor penitent sinners. He is the only city of refuge, the only friend for distressed souls to flee to, and the only one that will never leave them, and will suit all their need and can supply all their wants, and will at last present them spotless to the Father.

“Now I cannot but ascribe all glory to Him who has loved, pitied, and forgiven me, the chief of sinners indeed in my own eyes, who still washes and heals me by His precious blood, and doth ever rule and manage even my very evils to turn them for good. To Him, therefore, who is worthy with the Father and Holy Ghost, be—as is most due—all honour and glory, by all His church in time and eternity, Amen, and Amen.”

In perfect accord with the tenor of the above is the following from a letter Harris wrote about this time to Mr. Whitfield:—

“Your life, peace, and health are peculiarly dear to me, because you have left all to go about calling poor sinners to seek salvation by faith in the dear crucified Saviour. The preaching of the cross in the spirit will break down all before it. O my dear brother, the wisdom and pride of man hinder

the glory of that Man who is the eternal God from shining in the Church. Happy and highly honoured is that man that shall be counted worthy to open His infinite wounds before perishing sinners. Go on and blaze abroad His fame, until you shall take your flight to bow among the innumerable company before His unalterable throne. O Lamb of God, show us Thy glory, and manifest Thyself to us as Thou dost not to the world. Lord, I am ashamed that ever I took Thy tremendous name into my unclean lips, for I am as a brute beast before Thee."

The humility and deep reverence of the foregoing letters and extracts, as well as of all the statements of Harris at this juncture, cannot fail to elicit the profoundest regret that a difference should have arisen between him and his great contemporary. The Divinity of Christ and the infinite merit of His sufferings was to Harris the very heart of Christianity; and when his own method of presenting this truth was opposed he failed to comprehend the reason, and wrathfully charged the clerical party, as Rowlands and his friends came now to be called, with having lost their God and despising His blood. "I was led to thunder dreadfully," he remarks in his journal, "against the enemies of God's blood, crying, 'You have trampled it under your feet and joined with those who do so; and God will confound you, and His blood will burn you, and scatter you, and wither you.' I then cried, 'I have much to do to keep from naming you by your names that have left God's work and joined his enemies, whom I must die fighting with. I don't think I shall be a means of convincing you, but I must leave a testimony that will burn in your conscience for ever.'"

But the monopoly of intemperate zeal did not belong to Harris. Rowlands retaliated with equal vigour. He gave heed to disquieting rumours, allowed himself to be influenced by the distorted communications of mischievous professors

who aimed to make the breach wider, and it is supposed was too magisterial in dealing with a nature so sensitive and gentle as that of Harris undoubtedly was.* He charged him with being ill-informed; he retorted to the accusation of having lost his God by speaking of Harris as worshipping a defunct god, and on one occasion he held up his views to ridicule by an unworthy illustration borrowed from the sack of Rome. When the northern barbarians were committing havoc in the city, the soldiers appointed to guard the divinities of the pantheon were roused from their slumbers by the cackling of a goose, whence Rowlands inferred that a living goose was better than a dead god.†

It is evident from the whole drift of the altercation that a reconciliation between these great men was a matter of exceeding difficulty, and that if cordial good-will is at any time to be re-established it must take place after some amount of temporary estrangement. Accordingly we find that at a General Association held at Llanidloes in May, 1750, they came to an open separation, and the painful incident is known in the history of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism as the Rupture between Harris and Rowlands. Mr. Harris retained to the end of his days his glowing religious ardour; and while he never assumed an attitude of hostility toward Welsh Methodism, his connection with it as an organization was now and for ever at an end.

* Anonymous Elegy.

† "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 133.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RUPTURE—(*continued*).

IT has been conjectured that so painful an event as the disagreement between Harris and Rowlands could hardly have taken place on the exclusive ground of doctrinal divergence. The opinions Harris held coincided in the main with the tenets of the orthodox, and even his characteristic expressions in reference to the sufferings and death of God are according to the analogy of scripture,* and were adopted into the writings of some of his contemporaries, especially in the hymns of Charles Wesley in England, and in the productions of Williams, of Pant-y-celyn, amongst his brethren in Wales. It is also a well-known fact that Rowlands could exercise toleration in doctrinal matters. When the Rev. Peter Williams avowedly adopted the Sabellian teaching, of which Harris was suspected, he declined to take part in the prosecution against him, on the ground that the subject was too important, and that he had not sufficient discernment to know whether Williams was right or wrong; and after his own inexperienced son, the Rev. Nathanael Rowlands, had spoken in a harsh and irritable manner at the discussion of the case at an Association at Aberystwyth, when Peter Williams was excommunicated, his father chided him with the remark that he had condemned a man who was worthier than himself.

It is possible another cause of the separation may be found in what a pitiful necessity requires to be described as the mutual rivalry and jealousy between these great men. They differed widely in temperament. The nature of Harris, notwithstanding the mildness of his private life, was eager and impatient, adapted for imperious command or im-

* Acts xx. 28.

petuous attack; and while those qualities were a source of power in the rough pioneer work of his earlier years, they would stand in poor comparison against the diplomatic self-possession of Rowlands when they both came together for the corporate action of the monthly or quarterly gatherings. Harris was by far the more popular; he had laboured and suffered night and day for years beyond any of his co-adjutors; he had also been invested with an official position as chief of all the societies, and from these and other considerations conceived that he had a claim to the exercise of authority, and seemed to resent insubordination. "I have found," he wrote, "that the spirits of many grew whole, great, and proud, and would not take the word of reproof or exhortation, although they called me their father; and I really was so, as I began the work in this last revival, especially in Wales, though I have spent part of my time in England to spread abroad the fame of my dear Saviour." That the assumption of his rights with, it may be, what was regarded as too much arrogance for a layman, was the occasion of offence may be inferred from the elegy composed by Williams of Pant-y-celyn at his friend's decease: after bidding Harris farewell, he congratulates him on having now obtained a position in which earthly ambition is lost in the more excellent promotion of heavenly rank. The same failing was also pointedly stated, but with less of brotherly charity, by Rowlands at an Association, where the case of Mr. Peter Williams was under discussion. Warning him against too inflexible an adherence to his private opinions, he remarked: "Beware, my dear Williams, beware and take heed to yourself. Remember Harris, poor fellow; he desired to be the head, but God made him the tail."*

It would have been a reflection upon the memory of Harris had he sought the pre-eminence in order to gratify a sordid ambition. He regarded himself as the chief pastor of an im-

* "Life of Rowlands," by Morris Davies, p. 31.

mense flock, and sought to guide them only that he might lead them to richer pastures. The word of command might now and again have sounded dictatorial, but it was issued by one who believed himself to be under the direct impulse of the Spirit of God ; and if now and again he exhibited signs of impatience, it arose from the inability of his followers to ascend to the eminencies on which he himself delighted to dwell, rather than from a morose and censorious disposition.

The first indications of impatience are seen on the occasion of his return from the Metropolis to which he alludes in the following terms :—“ After being some months in London I returned again and came through several towns in England to Bristol, and from thence to Wales, in the year 1742. I now saw clearly that many abused the liberty of the Gospel by turning the grace of God into wantonness, such as spiritual pride, judging and despising others ; and because they do not believe that there is perfection or deliverance from the essence of sin attainable here, therefore they sit easy under the power of pride, anger, lightness of spirit, and love of the world. When I saw this I had a new light and power to preach the genuine fruits of real faith, and the necessary consequence of every divine truth savingly believed in the heart, and to distinguish between nominal and real Christians ; and (I saw) the absolute necessity of exhorting and persuading all to make their calling and election sure, and to have the victory over all their spiritual enemies. This doctrine caused a vehement opposition, but I was encouraged by seeing daily the good effect it had on the sincere to rouse, purify, and drive them to the Lamb of God.”

The chief cause, however, of the ardent desire of Harris to have others advance in the divine life arose from the manifestation he had of the glory of Christ in the year 1743. The foremost effect of that manifestation, as we have seen, was a yet more vigorous straining on the part of Harris after higher spirituality so as to become lost in God ; and the next effect

was a natural hope that the more full exhibition of the glory of Christ, to which his ministry was now exclusively devoted, would lead to a similar increase of faith and consecration in the life of others. Whether or not he was raising the standard above the limits of present practicability, he sought to stimulate his followers to no higher flights than he was with a thorough disdain of wordly motives endeavouring to reach for himself, and bitter was his disappointment when the response he elicited, especially from the ministers, accorded not with the demands of the truth.

"About the year 1746," he writes, "I saw another spirit of sifting creeping into the work, which was yet different from that which had been before, namely, the spirit of levity, pride, foolish jesting, unwatchfulness, and carnal rejoicing; and that took place immediately after extensive frames and transports—the effects of nature—which many seemed to enjoy at the hearing of the Word and singing, and the real and serious spirit that began the work was at length almost extinguished. This lay with weight upon my heart, together with the additional weight of my own infirmities,—seeing the enemy advancing as a flood and gaining ground, and now very likely to do that in which he had once failed by all the outward opposition. The spirit of awakening sinners in the ministry was also lost in great measure, together with its real and solid fruits in the spirit and the hearts of men. I now also beheld very evidently a tendency in the ministry to please men, and to appear wise and popular in the world; and a great many of my nearest friends, both in England and Wales, losing their former simplicity, although the number of teachers was increasing daily. In a word, the Spirit that began and carried on the work was seemingly vanishing gradually away. Many saw this and were concerned, and are waiting for His returning to renew the work. Yet we proceed in Wales notwithstanding the great jars and disputes that arose amongst us."

About the year 1749 Mr. Harris conceived the idea of

remedying the evil by a yet more direct and personal investigation into each member's particular experience, and imagined that religious growth could be promoted by authoritatively prescribing to each one according to age, condition, opportunities, and other circumstances, the particular spiritual regimen his case required. "At this time I felt more of the difficulty of the work I was engaged in, namely, of dealing with souls aright, and of bringing them to the knowledge of the true God in Christ, and to direct them only to that great Shepherd of souls. I obtained also knowledge of the necessity of seeing and knowing the state of all I discoursed with, and of whom I had the care, and to learn to make a difference by giving to each what was proper and suitable for their good according to the state they were in—as babes, little children, young men, fathers, or perhaps carnal men in the house of God, who were not as yet begotten to a lively hope ; that babes should be properly nourished as redeemed with most precious blood, and who are exceedingly dear on that and many other considerations to the Saviour ; that little children also should be properly instructed, disciplined, nursed, that they might grow up according to the Father's purpose ; and that young men in Christ should have all regard shown to them—and not too much—as being due to their situation respecting places, work, and military weapons which they assume ; and that the fathers in Israel, who are called to be rulers and pillars in His house, have their just place, authority, and esteem. This helped much to make my place and incumbrance very weighty to me, and made my spirit cry: 'Who is sufficient for these things?'"

"Thus also," he continues, "was shown more clearly to me in many instances the greatness and difficulty of the work, especially the spiritual work of the ministry, and the life of faith ; and how (by something in nature appearing like faith, love, and humility) souls are deceived, and think themselves

changed, and born again, and that they adorn the Gospel, when it is really nothing else but what our Saviour termed the whited walls and painted sepulchres,—nature being only outwardly changed, enlightened, and influenced, yet not without some influence of the Spirit of God, so that there were some sensations of joy and sorrow which such persons were accustomed to; and they take this to be a Gospel faith and real change, but it proves at last nothing but a change in the flesh, and a house built on the sand, whilst self-love and the spirit of the world lies deep under all, and the strong man armed was never cast out, for he still, though hiddenly, kept God's seat in the heart. And thus, though the spirit of such was never awakened by God's voice, neither through the Law nor Gospel, yet he thinks perhaps that he has experienced the real power of both; but the heart was never convinced spiritually of unbelief (although the understanding has been enlightened to receive new notions), nor has he been convinced of the evil of spiritual and secret sins, of his own total fall by nature, and his ignorance of the Saviour and His Blood. Such superficial professors should tremble, lest when trials come, notwithstanding all their profession and supposed faith in the Saviour, they may be ready to join in that blasphemous cry of the Jews, 'This man shall not reign over us;' or, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?'

"I was brought more and more to see the deceitfulness that is in man, how nature may appear like grace, being improved and checked, and seemingly rectified by having the course of it turned from delighting itself in the common way of the world, of pleasures and honour, &c., to run in a religious channel; now delighting itself in hearing sermons and singing hymns, especially in having the passions enflamed, never considering whether they were truly rooted and grounded in Christ, but only seemed to be strengthening, establishing, and building each other up in the faith, and imagined that they were thus growing in grace; whilst evidently the spirit

of their minds staid behind in the world, had neither power nor authority over the spirit of the world, nor retained that distance from it which perhaps they once sought; and yet they showed the same *appearance* of faith, love, and zeal as formerly.

“Now seeing things in this light, a necessity was laid upon me to lift up my voice like a trumpet to all professors to examine their profession, and to make a close search in what the foundation of their religion and faith was seated: whether in the outward man called flesh or nature, or whether it had indeed penetrated to the inward man called the heart or spirit. I saw clearly that there is such a thing as knowing Christ after the flesh by a kind of prophetic knowledge and views of Him at a distance, such as Balaam had, and from those views have a certain confidence in Him, and seemingly great joy and happiness (as the seed on the stony ground), and yet the heart be whole, self-righteous, and worldly amidst all this, and the spirit carnal, asleep, and unawakened in bondage to the god of this world, being never convinced of the sin of nature, and the evil of unbelief, and the difficulty of believing as a sinner in the Saviour, and of obeying the call given to such in the Gospel; they look back to something that they have done or felt at different times, and from hence they draw the conclusion that they are in the covenant, and belong to God, and shall therefore be saved.

“I saw plainly that this was the religion of most professors; they formed a faith to themselves without coming as lost damned sinners to the cross, and looking to Him as the Israelites looked to the Brazen Serpent, fleeing to Christ as a man fled from the avenger of blood into the City of Refuge. No wonder then when this confidence is settled that the spiritual life, the daily combat, the victory of faith, the feeding on the flesh and blood of God our Saviour, the mysteries of His Person as God and Man, opened in all His obedience and humiliation, and the infinite depths of His glorious riches, and

the wonders of His blood and wounds, with the infinite torments which He endured—no wonder, I say, that these mysteries remain a secret to them, and afford no life or entertainment to them, but become matters of speculation and controversy, if not ridicule, instead of being their life, delight, and daily food.

“The more my spirit was raised to the Lord to see the value of His precious Blood, the more necessity I saw of having that fountain daily to wash me and all I did; and also to testify to all of this fountain, which alone cleanses from all sin, and by which alone we overcome. By seeing and feeling this in my own soul, I had cause to fear and to suspect the religion of many, whom I hoped formerly were come to Mount Sion and to the Blood of sprinkling, that the strong-man armed had been cast out only for a time, and that the natural enmity of the first Adam and the spirit of the old Covenant (which is opposite to the new way of salvation by the blood and death of a Saviour) had not been cast out and mortified; but after all that God had done in and for them they were no more than outward-court worshippers. Though many cried, ‘We are Abraham’s children—we are God’s people, a chosen generation,’ such nomination of ourselves is not sufficient when the Lord denies us as not being born of Him.

“Then I was led often to show what were the works and actions of Abraham’s faith. Being dead to his possessions and country, he really obeyed the call and went out to wander in a strange land among heathens, not knowing whither he went; and also denied himself, forsook his own reason by believing what appeared impossible, namely, that he should have a son from a barren womb that was ripe for earth; and again, by offering up that same Isaac, who was the delight of his heart and desire of his eyes, on a mere command without having any satisfaction given to the carnal enquiries of his reason;—which noble works and actions our Saviour showed to the Jews when He was on earth, and are now left on record

for all His spiritual seed likewise. Also I often spoke of the Israelites, how many thousands of them died in the wilderness for that damnable sin of unbelief, not taking God at His word, and not venturing on the promise in the face of all difficulties from giants, walled towns, and fenced cities. O how unbelieving they were notwithstanding all the wonderful works which He had done for them in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in feeding them with angels' food so many years in the wilderness, and showing His love and favour to them above all the nations on the earth; and though He had so often pardoned them by the entreaties of Moses, especially by his putting Him in mind of His blessed Name and glory, and how the nations would blaspheme, and say that He could not after all bring them to Canaan where He intended. But their stubborn unbelief made Him at last to swear in His wrath that they should never enter into His rest.

“These and the like considerations made me shed many tears over professors lest it should be their case,—for ‘all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition.’ 1 Cor. x. 11. As Paul applies it to the Christian Church,—though this cannot take place literally under the Gospel dispensation; yet spiritually it might be the case of every individual professor, or a party of professing Christians,—therefore it serves as a warning to all lest spiritually the same judgment should overtake us after all His kind dealing towards us. We should tremble lest our spirits stay behind in the world, and come not to the Saviour continually, obeying His present call to go on from conquering to conquer, to take possession of the Land of Promise—the dear Saviour and His glorious kingdom, in spite of all oppositions that arise and set themselves against us both from our corrupt nature and others.

“Seeing this self and carnal spirit getting ground and growing under the seemingly glorious work that was going on, and professors willing to content themselves with false peace,

overlooking their sins, being not truly brought by the Holy Spirit daily under a deep sense of them to the cross of Christ to see them there punished, forgiven, and done away in His blood (superficial light and knowledge can never penetrate to this spiritual discovery of our sins thus laid upon God our Saviour, neither can it feed and derive all its comfort from His sufferings and death),—and seeing so many resting short of this discovery in what they received from the Lord, and not relying by faith on Christ and what He had done and suffered for us, I had reason to fear there were but few born again; for where a new man is formed he must have the Bread of Life, Christ Himself; he cannot be satisfied with hearing of Him, he must have Him for his constant object to speak with and to delight in Him; and must have His Body and Blood daily for his meat and drink; in a word his Redeemer must be his all upon whom he rests. And those who are rightly and truly awakened to believe what the Lord says of the miserable state of man by nature without being made a new man in Christ Jesus, cannot rest anywhere without coming to Jesus and knowing Him for themselves, and that He is their Saviour, and what He had done and suffered for them is become their continual meat and drink on which they feed; and thus they come up out of the wilderness leaning on their Beloved.

“Perceiving thus that the work was not effectually carried on, I could not but sound the alarm, and cry aloud, ‘O watchmen! O watchmen! What of the night! What of the night!’ I had authority through the Spirit of God to declare against the tares growing in the Lord’s garden, and at the same time calling sinners to the great atonement in the Blood of Christ, and showing also how the sin of secretly despising it or thinking of it carnally as common blood is the greatest of all sins, and that God will not deal with us sinners but in and through Christ’s Blood. And as the Jews dared not come before Him without the blood of the sacrifice offered in the

Temple, how can we then presume to deal with God without the Blood of Christ? And as it is not only sometimes that Satan and our evil nature do set upon us to tempt and defile us, but they do it continually (if we rightly feel and know what passes), then are we continually under an absolute necessity of having Christ's Blood to wash and cleanse us from our sins, and His Spirit to renew our souls. O the infinite and wonderful efficacy of Christ's most precious Blood! How it fills the whole creation, and has infinity in it because it is the Blood of God, by which He redeemed His Church and cleanses His people from all their sins." *

The foregoing extract is interspersed with strong and glowing expressions of Harris's views in reference to the Divinity of Christ in His sufferings and death; but blended with these expressions, and arising from them, we have his idea of the practical holiness and higher life of faith that should result from the knowledge of this truth, and his opinion of the state of the members of the societies at the time in relation to it, as well as his belief that all had need of more strict and authoritative supervision and training in order to lead them up to the more perfect knowledge and practice.

It was, perhaps, the too arbitrary enforcement of this oversight, and not an undue straining after autocratic power for its own sake, that led to the charges preferred against him; and this, notwithstanding some faint insinuations to the contrary in the elegy he composed, was emphatically the view of Mr. Williams, of Pant-y-celyn. When Harris had practically withdrawn from the Connexion, and a motion was made to get him to resume his former position, hints were freely thrown out that his claims were prejudicial to Christian liberty, that he wanted the Association to be under his own control, so as to cancel all rules, orders, and directions, and have everybody come and go at his bidding, and in fact that he

* Life of Harris, 1791, pp. 67—74.

should be their master on earth so far as to deprive them of the right of consulting either their brethren, the word of God, or their own conscience. The unfairness of these representations were such that Williams, in a letter he wrote to Harris on the subject, craves the latter's pardon for their folly, and then goes on to relate how he took up his friend's vindication. "I answered that you meant no more than carrying on such connection and union with us as would through God's blessing do good both to us and all the Church of Christ, that you intended to be no more a rabbi or a master than what the Spirit of Christ had put you ; that you would willingly carry on the grand interest of souls in connection with us as in former times, excepting (that) you could not go so often abroad; that you designed not in the least to domineer or over-rule the heritage of the Lord ; but on the other hand that you would do your utmost endeavour to guide, and bring such discipline about as would most probably be edifying. And as soon as I put things in that light before them as the sum of what you (required), all with one voice expressed a hearty consent to desire you to come among us, and were willing to appoint our Associations where you would think fit. It would be an invaluable privilege to the whole church to have you abroad, and in such publick places as would be most convenient. Dear Sir, come, come soon then ; all is ready to receive you ; you were never since you (became) a soldier of Jesus more accepted in the church than at this day by preachers and (people). You were and are owned more than any perhaps in Wales."* The remainder of the letter is not coherently decipherable, but there is some allusion to "Brother Rowlands."

The measures and tone adopted by Mr. Williams to bring Harris and his brethren together, were highly respectful ; but all were not so complaisant ; and as opposition of any kind was foreign to the deference Mr. Harris had hitherto received, and irritating to his ardent temperament,

* "Goleuad," Oct. 16, 1890.

he naturally took offence. He had always been accustomed to act upon his own impulse, based upon the persuasion that he was under the direct leadership of the Spirit of God; and now that some of his own converts and subordinates and spiritual children revolted against him, he was grieved at heart, and rather than be foiled in his conscientious endeavours, decided to separate from his brethren and work out his own plan in his own way.

The separation of Harris from Rowlands, and the ranging of these great leaders in opposition, became the signal for a general muster throughout the Welsh Methodist camp; but instead of uniting their forces as hitherto in antagonism to the common foe, the societies and members took sides upon the question, and became known distinctively as Harris's people and Rowlands's people. The party of Rowlands, who were strongest in South Wales, included most of the clergy who were identified with the Methodist movement, together with some of the prominent exhorters. The partisans of Harris on the other hand contained the strength of the rank and file. The fact of his being a layman, and a lurking suspicion that his clerical brethren had treated him with scant courtesy, together with the indebtedness of so many to him as their spiritual father, and the unwearied intercourse he had kept up with the societies in all parts of the country, procured him a paramount influence, and the majority of the members and exhorters, especially in North Wales, were on his side.

The confusion and bitterness resulting from this unhappy division was the severest trial the Calvinistic Methodist Denomination had yet sustained. Hitherto Harris and Rowlands had been looked upon with an excess of regard that bordered on worship; and now that they were at variance, and displayed some of the imperfections of ordinary beings, their youthful and ignorant followers became distracted to a degree that they knew not what step to take. It once happened, but without any design on the part of either, that they

were preaching within a mile of each other at the same time near Llanidloes, and great was the contention as to which of the services the people should attend ; and once when they happened to meet at Ty-coch, a preaching station near Morriston, and the dispute ran high, the converts were astonished and bewildered by the scene.

Immediately after the rupture some of the exhorters of Harris's party began to visit the societies in various parts, and after preaching would invite the members to remain, ask them if they were on the Lord's side, caution them against being deceived by the clerics, as they styled Rowlands and his friends, and then as a final warning would denounce their opponents as the party who had lost their God. The majority of the people being on Harris's side were easily provoked to unfriendly measures. Rowlands and his supporters were regarded as dangerous ; houses and preaching stations and chapels were denied them, and in one case members of the same family were divided upon the subject. This happened at Brynbugad in Denbighshire. Edward Parry, an exhorter, of this place, was a follower of Harris—his father a partisan of Rowlands ; but such was the estrangement between them that though they lived in adjoining houses they invited separate exhorters, held separate services, and would by no means countenance each other's proceedings. The hopeful prospects of the great work were thus in danger of being blighted in the bud. Even Edward Parry was temporarily disheartened, and rejoining the Established Church was promoted to be churchwarden from joy at his return. The same discouragement befell many other exhorters, and the societies under their care became hopelessly disbanded.

The forementioned instances are possibly of an extreme nature, but the discord arising from the rupture was general throughout the land, and the loss to the Methodist Revival great and serious. Scores of the smaller societies were scattered beyond recovery, many of the members became

pronounced Dissenters, others continued their relation with the Establishment, and some fell away from religion altogether. The exhorters also discontinued their endeavours, with the exception of those who had declared for Rowlands, those who rejoined him from time to time from Harris's party, and one or two who sought vent for their superfluous enthusiasm by starting sects on their own account. One of these latter was Thomas Sheen, who lapsed into Antinomianism and gathered a few followers in the neighbourhood of Builth.

The stagnation that resulted from the withdrawal of Harris lasted for thirteen years; but in no county was the effect so fatal as in Radnorshire. This county being near to Harris's home was early visited by him, and became an easy conquest to his awakening ministry; but at his retirement the almost perfect machinery he had set in motion became so clogged that before the end of the century there was scarcely a vestige to be found of the once flourishing societies.

That such a total collapse did not take place throughout the Connexion was due to the exertions of Rowlands and others of almost equal influence in other parts of the country. These men, together with the exhorters who came over from time to time from the waning side of Harris, kept on preaching, visiting societies, and establishing new ones where practicable; and when after years of depression another revival broke out in 1762, the denomination received new life from the dead. This revival, as well as others that followed, never succeeded in re-organising the Connexion on the perfect lines of Harris, but they brought down a measure of the Divine influence that has carried it forward with uninterrupted progress to the present day.

The account of this painful division and its causes and effects have possibly been drawn out to a wearisome length; but as it forms an epoch in the life of Harris as well as in the history of the Denomination, it was impossible it could be avoided. The evils resulting from it have already been en-

larged upon, and it only remains to suggest some possible good. It awoke the Denomination for the first time to the consideration of profound theological questions; it established, as Harris makes frequent mention in his journal, the paramount importance of holding on tenaciously to the Godhead of the Lord Jesus and the infinite merit of His death; it infused into the Connexion a burning zeal for orthodoxy on this particular theme; and by the violent zeal with which Harris insisted on such an experimental knowledge of the glory of Christ as would transform the life, the Denomination became so charged with jealousy for holy conduct and character, that the name of Methodist in Wales became synonymous with strictness and severity; while, as a subsidiary advantage, the whole story is on record as a warning example of the disastrous effects of division and strife amongst the followers of God.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RECLUSE.

THE discovery of a hitherto unpublished manuscript amongst the remains of Harris at Trevecca enables us to trace the course of events immediately subsequent to the Rupture. The separation took place at Llanidloes in May, 1750, and a month later, that is in June, the party of Rowlands, including four clergymen and eleven preachers, met at Llantrissant "to declare against the doctrine and spirit of Brother Harris." In the meantime Brother Harris himself was not inactive. He mustered his forces the same month, first at Trevecca and then at Llansamlet, "to wait on the Lord to see" what could be done; and on the 26th July, 1750, they formed an Association at St. Nicholas, which was the first Association "without the others," and where twenty-three exhorters who were present, with about as many more who could not then attend, were enrolled as members of a new order. The result for the time was highly satisfactory, for Harris remarks that "there seems to be a new face on things. We are now in hope to see our Saviour's glory and the discipline of His Spirit and the life of faith brought in to the reformation, and Christ alone exalted among us." Amongst the resolutions passed was one to the effect that societies were to be reorganized on a new basis, that none were to be a part of this Body or called by our name but such as either see the glory of our Saviour, or see their ignorance of Him, and indeed live by faith on Him; and that all the members should join in the worship and ordinances of the Established Church.

A feature or two of this rival Association deserve to be noticed. The first was the presence of Mr. Peter Williams, who put in an appearance during the proceedings, and the second the presence of a lady whose name is given as Madam Griffiths. Mr. Williams had a leaning towards Harris's opinions, and was eventually excommunicated for giving them too great publicity; he declined to be enrolled as a member of the new system, but his presence was an evidence of sympathy. Mrs. Griffiths was a sister with an ambition for public ministration, and a pretence to prophecy and the discerning of spirits. The peculiarity of her views and the propriety of admitting one of her sex to public work had, in addition to the main issue, been one of those minor subjects that had divided Harris from the assumedly more decorous and dignified party who were opposed to him. Harris himself had from the beginning been favourable to female co-operation in the work of the Revival, and a noticeable feature of his correspondence is the large number of letters that are indited to "sisters." Writing to Mrs. James, of Abergavenny, afterwards Mrs. Whitfield, on Feb. 5, 1739, while on his journey to North Wales, he says, "Pray don't, when you are writing to the societies, so much consider what will be the opinion of the world of you; let nothing appear unfashionable, improper, or unbecoming more. St. Paul mentions some honourable women that helped him in his work; and the Holy Spirit may breathe on your letters to be useful to souls." And again writing March 3, 1740, to Miss Anne Williams, afterwards his wife, he remarks, "Keep up as constant a correspondence as you can with the societies; and use authority to them, and then you'll have it more in your power to benefit them."

Whether it was the peculiarity of her views, or the more arrogant nature of her pretensions, or a repugnance to female co-operation that led to Madam Griffiths being opposed, she was by Harris himself regarded as a true mother in Israel,

and had particularly ingratiated herself into his good opinion by the accuracy with which, in the exercise of her prophetic foresight, she had foretold of the separation, and by the assistance she would be able to render as a discerner of spirits in knowing who was true and who false. After some consultation amongst the brethren at St. Nicholas, it was decided to admit her to the Association, where she at once felt at ease, for "the Lord opened her mouth most home indeed to show that if we were spiritual we should see the spirits of people as plain as we see their faces." The addition of one who pretended to such power was a great acquisition, and hence we find Sister Griffiths was present at nearly every Association down to that held at Trevecca, Oct. 2, 1751, at which date the record comes to an abrupt termination.

The monotonous round of resolutions passed can be of no general interest, and it must suffice to say that the reformed Association of Harris was of a more restricted nature than the former he had founded, being in fact a fraternity of exhorters held together by a solemn pledge of surrender to the Lord, and a compact of faithfulness and obedience to the voice of the whole.

The terms of communion can best be seen from the following extracts from the minutes of an Association held at Llwynyberllan, Breconshire, the last day of 1750, and the first days of 1751. After a solemn declaration from each that the light of the Saviour was in their spirits and not in the head only, and that in the full persuasion of their call to preach they were prepared for any amount and form of hardship, and to carry on the reformation in the Established Church, they met again on the first of the year, and deliberated all day and the whole of the following night. The spiritual tension they experienced, led as they were by the rapt admonitions and agonizing prayers of Harris, must have been of a severe kind, for the records add that "About three in the morning the Lord came down, and the following per-

sons were constrained to give up themselves to the Lord and to each other in Him for ever.* Brother Harris stood up and asked who was constrained to give their hearts and hands," and then one after another of those who were "wholly clear" came forward, and "these had each a visible glory resting upon him as soon as they yielded, and felt a relation they never had before, and felt all things in common."

The following day the meeting was transferred to Neuadd, in the parish of Disserth, near Builth, and, as many more of the exhorters had now assembled, the conditions of union were again elucidated, with the result that several more names were handed in; and when they met again on the following morning, which was now the third of the month, twenty-eight or thirty brethren were present "to give themselves to the Lord and to each other," the compact being made by the "free consent and light of each in particular and of all in general; each one also making a surrender of soul, body, name, riches, and life to the Lord, and engaging themselves to one another for better for worse, to take up the cross and be in all one, according to the Scriptures."

It is almost needless to add that however conscientious Mr. Harris was with regard to the life of faith and total absorption in God, and however correct his notion that in ministerial life there should be a community of all interests, his ideal was too exalted for the general run of the exhorters; and it was with disappointment he found that the ranks of those who had made the solemn pledge required thinning out. Some had to be rejected for their inactivity, some for disregarding their vow of obedience, some because it was found "that they had only the light in the head," while one withdrew of his own accord "speaking contemptibly of having all things in common as likely to breed laziness and injustice."

The separate Association established by Harris being conditioned upon a life of devotion and obedience and a commu-

* The names are omitted as of no permanent interest.

nity of interests, was based upon a decidedly monastic principle, and could not in the nature of things be held together without some local centre and a visible bond of union; and as the informing spirit of the whole movement was the mind and genius of Harris, it was natural that the principal gatherings and operations should be concentrated at Trevecca, where he resided. Here he began holding daily preaching services; and as a great number came from various distances to hear him, and expressed a wish to be near enough to enjoy his regular ministry, he began to think of providing for their accommodation, and was thus led into the idea of erecting a large building which he intended as a kind of monastic retreat, where he purposed presiding as "father" over a community of his own spiritual children, who from this event came to be designated as The Trevecca "Family."

The project had been brooding in his mind for some time, stimulated it is supposed by the example of his friend Whitfield's Orphanage in Georgia, by the success of the much larger institution founded some years before by Augustus Herman Franke, in Halle, Germany, and by the settlements springing up amongst the Moravians in England; but the matter did not assume a definite form until forced by the present combination of circumstances. Writing to his friend, the Moravian Bishop Gambold, Dec. 27, 1750, he says, "How our Saviour intends hereafter to dispose of this branch of His work we know not; but that He really has a great work going on amongst us, and that He is laying the foundation of a plan that will in His hands surmount rash opinions and all difficulties from every quarter, is very evident."

How the work proceeded shall be related in the words of those who chose to cast in their lot with Mr. Harris in his new undertaking.

"After seventeen years of hard labour in the Lord's work through Wales and great part of England, Mr. Harris settled at Trevecca, where he spent the greatest part of his time in

his own house, though he made several journeys from thence in the following years. A few of those who received a blessing through his ministry in former years began to gather to him there; and as he preached to them two or three times a day they earnestly desired to stay there with him. The ardent desire of these sincere people he could not withstand, and thus on April 14, 1752, he laid the foundation of the present building at Trevecca, though he had at that time neither friends nor money. He set about it purely in faith, relying on the Lord and His promise, having an impression on his mind for some years past that he should build a house for God; and he set about it in full persuasion that the same God who had sent him at first in an uncommon manner to awaken the country, also now laid this undertaking upon him. He himself writes thus concerning it:—

“‘I was impelled to build by the same spirit which sent me about to preach, and at a time I was far from being provided with money or friends, for the latter had deserted me, and instead of the former I had demands upon me and about forty workmen to pay and maintain; and yet I made use of no means to get one shilling but an humble pleading of and confiding on the promise, on which I trust my all as both for temporal and spiritual things.’

“‘Soon after he began to build some people came to offer their work and help, that they might have a more convenient opportunity to be under his care, and profit by his ministry daily; thus the family began to be gathered together this year. Mr. Harris had at this time a severe fit of sickness, but yet though very weak he would preach to the people till he was seemingly ready to die from fatigue, being not able to move himself from the chair he used to sit on and speak from, but we were obliged to carry him in it to his room. At other times when he recovered a little he would call the family to his bedroom, and would exhort them from his bed for a long while, the divine blessing attending it to their souls. He continued

some months in this fit of sickness, expecting to go home to his dear Lord and Saviour, as he himself expresses it. 'I was all this time in continual hopes of going home to my dear Saviour, expecting it with solicitation.' And yet all this while he continued to discourse daily to the people as one already in the suburbs of heaven."

On Tuesday, July 28, 1752, the part of the building known as The Hall was consecrated, and a Council, which lasted several days and drew together a large number of exhorters and others from all the counties of Wales with the exception of Flintshire, was held to celebrate the occasion. At this Council Mr. Harris himself, though suffering from great prostration, took part in the public services. He exhorted the preachers especially to be valiant, as now they had given themselves to the Lord they had nothing to lose, and added, "I came here to take my leave of you; I thought I should not have been able to come; but it is my desire my death may be as Sampson's, a greater fall to your enemies than all my life."

This illness, which threatened to take a fatal turn, and of which he had received many premonitions, was the inevitable breakdown after years of toil and tension. A letter he wrote January 1, 1753, to his friend Mr. Wesley, reveals the state of his mind in his affliction.

"Dear brother John Wesley,

"Shall I speak freely to you, as I am going before you to that dear Man who has indeed honoured you, whom I believe you would honour every way, for you live on His bloody sweat and passion? O, let your ministry be sprinkled with His blood indeed; let His mangled body be daily held before the people, till they really lose all confidence in the flesh by the knowledge of the Cross. I wish your ministry and the United Brethren, the Moravians, were united; it would be for the public good. The Godhead and glory of our Saviour's Person

and the inestimable benefit of His death are clearly set forth among them. Do not stumble at any stumbling-stone. The word respecting the mystery of God in our flesh, published under the Divine blessing, would prevail to win sinners and captivate them, and the people would bow to the influence of the knowledge of Jesus's amazing groans and sufferings; and the idol of self-righteousness, which a dozen years ago you began to attack, would tremble and fall before the true and spiritual preaching of His agony and bloody sweat.

"I shall enter into no particulars, as I have left a few things to be printed, which I should be glad you would cast an eye upon. I have fought a good fight, and have through millions of infirmities kept the faith, and am more than conqueror in the face of all my enemies through Him that loved me and washed me in His own blood. You and your brother Charles have ever been dear to me. The foundation, you know, is deep in the atoning blood and sufferings of Christ. We should be stirred up to maturity by abiding on His ineffable sufferings under the influence of the Holy Ghost. I have often feared that your wisdom and popularity would be injurious to you, and turn you from the simplicity of the Gospel and the mystery of the Cross, which flesh and blood cannot know, for it is foolishness to such, by which alone we are crucified to the world, and the world to us. 1 Cor. i. 18. Except the soul finds out this foundation all convictions, awakenings, desires, and stirrings will come to nothing and die away. If only a form of religion abides, it will do nothing but feed a pharisaical spirit, which makes the end of individuals worse than their beginning; and the reformation, intended by our dear Saviour for a real national blessing to this and future generations, would end in a stubborn, sectarian, whole, self-righteous spirit, which I know your soul would abhor. Nothing can prevent such an evil but a true and real acquaintance with our adorable Saviour's poverty, humiliation, and death.

"I have been expecting to be at the marriage supper of the

Lamb before this. O my dear brother, continue to honour His blood and death, and He will honour you. I send this as my dying and loving request to you : for the Lord's sake, for your own sake, and for the sake of thousands that attend your ministry, direct their eye to the Saviour ; suffer them not to idolize you. O let nothing fall from your lip or pen but what really turns the soul from self to the Saviour ; flesh and blood though ever so much reformed is but a whited sepulchre, and cannot inherit the kingdom. True religion changes a person and makes him happy. All is not the fruit of the Spirit that seems like it : the way is narrow and they are but few that find it. To deny ourselves is a difficult lesson, and there are but few that learn it. Farewell, be faithful to death.

“ I have written some things, in the time of my confinement, as I mentioned before, which in confidence of your love to that Saviour to whom I am going, I have ordered the bearer to show you, and which you will peruse and correct and publish if you have time, and think it would be of some service to the cause of our dear Saviour. I go homewards in hope of seeing you soon there, having overcome and made your robes white in the blood of the Lamb. Hearty salutation to your brother Charles, and all who love Jesus Christ in sincerity and have no other teacher, strength, righteousness, hope or life, but Christ, and who die to the world, and the world to them by the Cross. These all, whoever and wherever they are, I declare before men and angels, I love and carry in my heart,—a heart bleeding over a miserable world, and self-righteous, self-sufficient, whole-hearted professors, that will not come to the manger and the cross to adore their God, and be saved by His humiliation. I have been confined from my public services for some months, but through grace enabled all in my own house to testify of Him to all that come to me. What humility and self-denial are produced by the view I daily have of His glory and my happiness in Him ! I am really weary of nothing here but the body of sin in my

flesh, and the indifference of others about the matter ;—Christ is slighted and rejected ; poor sinners will not come unto Him ! I rejoice in you and the large field that is before you. Know that He that has been faithful in all, yea, to all that trust Him, will keep you from all the snares that surround you. Though I know not how to give over I must conclude.”

The illness of Mr. Harris, though long and painful, did not terminate fatally as he had anticipated ; but it had the effect of mellowing his mind as if he were already in view of the celestial city. The writings he desired Mr. Wesley to revise and print were possibly those reflections, afterwards published under the title of “ Dying Testimony.”* The spirit those reflections breathe is as remarkable for its repose as the previous life of Harris had been for its tireless energy. “ I cannot avoid writing,” he says, “ it being now the only way in which I can publish what the Lord does for me, and thus leave behind me a testimony to His grace and love. I see Him as the only hope of the world, and yet almost all unacquainted with Him ! I see Him as the only sun of the world, and yet almost all walking in darkness ! I see Him as the life of the dead, and the only deliverance, refuge, and heaven of poor sinners ; and yet how is He rejected ! I must declare I die weeping for Wales, especially over those who once appeared to run well ; and who, as I thought, would be my crown of rejoicing for ever ! O professors, let me speak to you when I am dead ; let these my dying requests sink into your hearts. Let my death be a means of awakening you, and making you sensible of your spiritual state, which is more naked, wretched, and poor than you imagine. You are in danger of falling as the Israelites did in the wilderness ; I have reason to fear lest the enemy should blind you as he did the Jews. God is the same now as He was then, and the enmity of fallen nature the same, only the sin of unbelief is greater, since we have their fall before our eyes. God pities,

* “ Life of Harris,” by Morgan, p. 257.

forgives, and receives none but those who are poor, self-condemned, broken-hearted, and sincere. If you would have peace with Him throw down your weapons, cease from your own wisdom, become as little children, and receive the truth in love.

“It was by an experimental knowledge of Christ crucified that I was brought from death to life, washed in the fountain of His blood, and enabled to live by faith. The way is the same now as formerly, and all who shall be saved must profess the same faith and experience the same divine teaching. Now, no man ever came into liberty without feeling himself in bondage; no man ever truly believed without finding it through an evil heart of unbelief the hardest thing in the world; nor did ever any deny themselves and take up the cross without perceiving hell, darkness, and wrath everywhere pursuing them, until taken into Christ the only refuge. This is a truth of which many hear something, but I fear sinks into very few hearts so as to wound and awaken them; else the love of the world, the fear of man, the desire of applause, and fear of censure, would not be so visible among professors. ‘He that believeth not shall be damned!’ Are you shocked at the expression? But if the sound of this truth be so harsh, what will the experience of it be? What will it be to see the creation consumed by fire, the sun darkened, the graves opened, and the God of heaven, who called upon you here freely offering you peace and pardon, now clothed with justice, coming ‘in flaming fire’ to take vengeance on all who have slept away the day of their visitation? What will then be the state of those who could not deny their own wisdom, nor get over the stumbling-blocks that were in the way, but would mind what did not belong to them, though the Lord Himself condescended to say, ‘What is that to thee, follow thou Me?’

“To my fellow-travellers whom I leave behind me as witnesses of the truth I feel the same love; I am with them in spirit through the incarnation, obedience, and blood of Christ.

All are helped and none hurt by this unity in the Cross. We live one life, we eat one bread, we speak one language though in many dialects. We are not only redeemed by one price to possess one heaven, and unite in one enjoyment at last, but even now we worship one God, share in one bliss, have one feeling, and live by one faith. As we fell in one common parent, so are we recovered by one Saviour, and have now a greater oneness than we imagine. Your sorrows and joys are mine. Soon you will find me among those who have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb, having come out of great tribulation, with palms in their hands, and with a new song in their mouths.

“I take leave of you all, wherever you are, for a little while. It is enough that the Lamb is on Mount Zion, and has all your cares and burdens on Himself. While others are distressed about many things you, have but one thing to mind, even your interest in Him, who, though He is your God, is also your brother and friend, and cannot bear to see you unhappy. He will not leave you long before He calls you to share in that glory which He is now preparing for you. The cry of my soul is, ‘Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.’ O how I love the glorified spirits and long to be among them, because they have no guile, no self, no corruption, no slavish fear, no wisdom or righteousness, but that of the Lamb.

“I feel my spirit continually from home. I know that I am one of the Lamb’s company, and cannot be long from Him. My spirit cries, ‘Lord, Thou hast not failed to pity and love me, because Thou hast given me what Thou hast promised to every poor penitent and humble spirit. I have faith to lay hold of Thy blood and righteousness. Thou canst not let me be long here. Thou must pity and call me home; for I am a stranger here.’ My spirit desires to be with Thee, that I may be filled with Thy fulness, that I may sin no more, wander no more from Thee, but eternally view Thy glory.

“I adore Thee that I was created with an immortal spirit;

that Thou didst follow me with thoughts of love and mercy when in a state of rebellion ; that Thou didst bear with me, more than with any other, after Thou didst call me ; that Thou didst continue to forgive and save me, never leaving me in the deep waters. For this I adore Thy free grace, and beg Thou wouldest make my death a blessing. Forgive all those who have hated me. Save them from their darkness ; and let me meet them before Thy throne to adore Thee for ever.

“ Take care, O Lord, of the few witnesses who come to Thy Cross, desiring to feed on Thy flesh and blood, as being eternal life, and nothing else. Take care of the House Thou hast put in my heart to build for the use of Thy poor pilgrims. Let it be full of Thy glory, and let none have power in it but such as do indeed love Thee. Keep those to whom I now commit it in that faith and simplicity which now appears to be in them. I leave the family under the care of Thy Spirit ; I trust Thou wilt live in them and speak by them when I am dead. I give them to Thee as my chief care, that Thou mayest be in the midst of them to rule, and make them faithful to Thee and Thy truth. Keep them from error, and let not the foot of pride come against them. Fit them for the work Thou shalt give them, by teaching, directing, and strengthening them, while they are daily united to each other and all Thy people.

“ My relations, whom I could not bring to the obedience of faith, O remember them, and bring them when I am gone. The child whom Thou hast given me is Thine, and I leave her under Thy care. The observations I have committed to paper I leave with Thee, to destroy or bring to light, as may be best for Thy cause. I adore Thee for the ineffable favour of giving me any thought of my dissolution before it takes place, for enabling me to settle my affairs, and for giving me freedom to speak my mind. This testimony I leave behind me to strengthen the hands of such as dare stand in the evil day, and cry aloud for Thee to a crooked and perverse gener-

ation. Whether I see aright in all things or not, I adore Thee that Thou hast made my heart one with Thine towards all Thy people. In this spirit I come to Thee, praying Thee to hide all my mistakes and turn my labour to what account Thou wilt.

“I find that my Saviour’s will is my heaven, be it what it may; and I think I have from Him insatiable cries to go home to my Father, Saviour, and Comforter. I adore Him for giving me leave to hope that my work is done, and that I shall soon come into His presence. My soul is like one at the door, waiting to be called in. I feel my spirit leaving all places, things, and men here below. O let me eat no more of the bread that perisheth: be Thou my Bread for ever. Be Thou my Sun, and let me see this no more. O take me where Thou showest Thy glory. I cannot see Thee with these eyes, but I am coming to Thee, and to the spirits about Thy throne. How lovely are the symptoms of approaching death to me. I love this body because Thou hast made it, and hast united it to Thyself; I give it to Thee to be embalmed in the earth, where Thine was laid. O what an inheritance do I soon hope to enjoy. My spirit I feel dies to my body, and to all about me, while I am resigned to the will of my dear Lord. O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and take me to Thyself.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

TREVECCA

THE first biographers of Harris inform us that “in the year 1753, a part of the building being finished, a great number of people flocked to him from all parts, many of them under conviction merely to hear the Word; and others partly from curiosity, the report of Mr. Harris’s preaching daily at Trevecca having spread throughout all Wales.” Satan also began to rage, and set the whole country as it were in an uproar, inventing all manner of lies that originated in the various ideas of the aim of the multitude in crowding to the place. However, the people continued to come there from all parts of Wales, some staying for a time, others returning home, partly because their present circumstances did not permit of their staying; partly complaining, some that the fare, others that the preaching and discipline, was too hard, and that Mr. Harris was an intolerable reprover. Yet for all this many settled there this year, especially single persons both men and women, giving themselves to the Lord and His work because they believed it was a part of the Lord’s work and suited to the rules laid down in the Bible.

“At the end of this year and the beginning of the year 1754 there was a settled family in Trevecca of about a hundred persons, besides those coming and going as we hinted before; and Mr. Harris took upon him the sole care of their spiritual and temporal concerns, having nothing outwardly adequate to provide for such a family, nor any manufactory set up, but only a couple of small rented farms and a little quantity of

wool bought for the women to spin to get their maintenance by. It is a difficult thing to imagine what straits Mr. Harris went through at this time concerning the outward care of the people only, besides the care of their souls, preaching publicly and exhorting privately daily, watching many nights to pray and wrestle with the Lord, and as soon as the family arose in the morning preaching again, exhorting them for hours together without having had any rest in bed, but yet with fresh power and spirit from the Lord. Of this we are living eye-witnesses.

“As to outward matters the Lord has been with us in a surprising manner. Frequently when a call for payment came to him he had no prospect in the world how to discharge the debt, but applying to the Lord in prayer and pleading His promise, and that he did not bear these burdens for himself but for Him, and therefore relying upon Him that He would certainly help and carry him through. And very often the Lord answered him in a very unexpected manner by sending some person or other with as much money as he wanted, either as an acknowledgment for the benefit received from his work or as a loan. Thus the Lord never forsook him, and he himself writes: ‘Being often in straits concerning temporal things, wanting twenty or fifty, or even a hundred pounds, I had nowhere to turn to for assistance but the promise, the Lord not relieving till the last pinch, and even then appearing from a quarter that none could ever imagine, some bringing and some sending me £10 or £20, and even £100, though living at a distance of seventy or eighty miles, being compelled to do so only by the Word sounding in their conscience night and day, and no man in the world knowing or imagining anything of it. Thus the Lord appeared for me many times. This seems strange to many, and well it may; yet it is real truth.’

“In the year 1755 several families came to Trevecca, especially from North Wales, some to live in the family,

others to farms in the neighbourhood, that they might have a more convenient opportunity of attending Mr. Harris's preaching. Many of them had substance; others were poor, and having many children were obliged to be assisted. Mr. Harris wrote thus about that time:—'No sooner was a great part of the building finished but there appeared here and there a family which I neither thought of nor sent for, nor could expect. Therefore it appears evident to me that not man but the Lord hath done great things for us. Many people continued to come notwithstanding crosses and trials to a place represented by all in the blackest manner, being drawn only by love to the truth and the force of the Lord's voice which they found to their hearts through my ministry, freely leaving their country and all that was dear to them, working and living hard, and leaving it wholly to me to order them both in their work and fare. There are now about a hundred persons old and young that board, work, and sleep in the house, amongst whom are ten families; and ten families live out in farms in the neighbourhood.'

"The plain truths which they formerly heard by Mr. Harris's ministry brought these people thither from all parts of Wales, and some even from England; and when they came to reside there many of them testified that the Word of God as preached by Mr. Harris was attended by more and more energy and benefit to their souls, and also that they saw a necessity of being under the Lord's discipline, as well as under the preaching of the Word, especially as the Lord hath appointed in His Word that His servants should meet in fellowship and use other means of grace for the benefit of His people, and that every true minister of the Gospel should be both a watchman and overseer to look after the flock (Acts xx. 28), and a preacher of the Word unto them (2 Tim. iv. 2).

"At the end of this year there were about one hundred and twenty persons in the family, besides those families in the

neighbourhood that belonged to it. Mr. Harris preached two or three times daily to the family, besides keeping private meetings with one part or another of them an hour every day of the week. They gave themselves thus to the Lord, and to His servants by the will of God, as the Holy Ghost directs us to do (1 Cor. viii. 5). From the beginning of the work the Lord hath moved and fitted out two or three exhorters as assistants to Mr. Harris, to exhort both at home and abroad; and by this time the Lord hath raised up others as helpers both in the ministry and government of the family."

The foregoing lengthy extract, which notwithstanding its lack of definiteness deserves to be printed, as affording the testimony of eye-witnesses to the private life of Mr. Harris and the internal working of the establishment he had now founded, was penned by one of those same two or three exhorters and assistants mentioned at the close of the last section, and who surviving their spiritual chief published his first biography in the year 1791. Their names were Evan Moses, Evan Roberts, and James Prichard; and upon them, next to Mr. Harris himself, and in particular upon the first named, devolved the management of the several enterprises into which the Institution branched out. This Evan Moses, a native of Aberdare, was a comparatively illiterate man, but in the precision of his ways and in the energy of his character, and in his devotion to the views and interests of his chief, he was a man after Harris's own heart, and after the death of the latter he continued to preside over the Institution till his own decease in the year 1805.

It would seem from the statement that the assistants were to labour abroad as well as at home, that the Institution was intended to radiate its influence throughout the country, in accordance with the primary intention of making the place a community of exhorters. Some of those assistants would travel to the extreme parts of Wales, and would endeavour to disturb the wickedness at revels and fairs in imitation of their

leader ; but they soon discovered to their dismay that the spirit and power of Harris himself was necessary for such venturesome work, and found it more to their personal comfort to confine themselves to milder themes, and in particular to extol the virtues of retirement at Trevecca.

The Institution at this latter place partook in a great measure of the discipline as well as of the seclusion of a monastery. The majority of the inmates were Harris's spiritual children, and hence the designation of "the family" by which they became known ; and hence also the term "father" by which they indicated at once their subjection and their attachment whenever they spoke of or addressed their spiritual superior.

One of the rules of the establishment required that all who intended making the place their permanent home, and consecrate themselves entirely to religion, should forfeit the whole of their worldly goods for the benefit of the common stock,—those who were poor and had need of labouring to contribute their earnings, and those who had means to sacrifice their wealth. The money received in this manner by Mr. Harris was laid out to the very best advantage for the common weal, and for the furtherance of those beneficent purposes eventually included in the scheme ; but the enemies of Harris, forgetful of the fact that he himself was the largest individual contributor, made this practice of confiscation the ground of numberless calumnies and misrepresentations. It was industriously rumoured that he sought to beguile people to Trevecca in order to enrich himself, or provide a dowry for his daughter, and many were the difficulties arising from the report. Mrs. Wynne, of Cefn-amlwch, Carnarvonshire, was, with the full consent of her husband, an early supporter of Harris and the Methodist revival ; but when she immured herself along with others at the Trevecca Monastery, Mr. Harris was accused of enticing her, and her husband, who was a landed proprietor in his county, vented his indignation

upon the Methodist societies and farmers on his estate. Simon Lloyd, Esq., a young gentleman of ancient family and position from Plas-yn-dref, near Bala, repaired to Trevecca for the spiritual benefit of a temporary retreat. In answer to his application the door was opened by Miss Sarah Bowen, one of the two young ladies from Tyddyn, Montgomeryshire, whose parents were amongst Harris's early converts. On the part of Lloyd it was a case of love at first sight, and as the attachment became mutual he desired to make arrangements for the marriage. Miss Bowen however had entered as a recluse for life, and her wealth being sunk in the common funds by her voluntary consent there was a difficulty in getting it restored. Mr. John Evans, of Bala, made a special journey to Trevecca to mediate in the matter, with the result that a satisfactory marriage settlement was drawn out, which is still extant with the signature of Howell Harris as one of the trustees. *

While the enemies of Harris were assiduous in vilifying his character, and waxing hot in proportion as he receded into deeper spirituality and sought to lead others into participation of his own intense life, the friends of his former days were unaltered in their opinions and undiminished in their attachment. He had differed from them partly on account of the rigidity of discipline which he apprehended ought to follow the proper acceptance of Christian truth; and now that he aimed at putting his theory into practice, those friends would have been the first to mark and lament any departure from the strictest lines of integrity. They continued, however, to love and revere him, and were on terms of growing intimacy to the day of his death. Even those who lived beneath the same roof were enthusiastic in his praise; while some who had been disposed to regard him with suspicion, upon closer enquiry received such well-authenticated information as to remove all doubts, and render Mr. Harris more valuable in their sight

* Life of Rev. J. Ffoulkes Jones, Chap. I.

than he ever would have been but for previous aspersions.* Mr. John Burnell, writing to him from London, August 8, 1754, said, "My heart has still the same love to you as ever; nor has it in the least been decreased by any scandal or reproach that has been thrown upon you by such as have no eyes to see the Saviour and His Bride."

The withdrawal of Harris from active co-operation with his brethren, and his retirement to the comparative obscurity of Trevecca, was nevertheless regarded with pain by many of his admirers. They deplored the absence of his mighty figure from the public battles with sin that required still to be fought. The Rev. W. Williams, of Pant-y-celyn, as we have already seen, cherished the utmost admiration for him as his former associate, and was eager to see him again at the head of his followers. In an elegy he composed at the decease of Harris, he declares that he would ever speak of him as his father, and compares him to the leader of an army of reapers suddenly maimed in the field by the sting of an adder, and relinquishing his position and weapon to the care of another.

The Rev. Charles Wesley was also grieved at the retirement of his friend. In an epistolary poem addressed to Harris at Trevecca, March 3, 1755, he seeks to stir him up to his former activity, in words that are worthy of being cited on account of the glowing description they give of the stormy passion with which Harris had been wont to charge the citadels of iniquity.† Mr. Wesley asks,—

"Still doth thy ling'ring indolence require
A pattern fair, to set thy soul on fire?
Behold his shining footsteps from afar,
And trace with me the thunderbolt of war!
Legions of fiends and men in vain oppose
A single champion 'gainst a world of foes;—
He rushes on, the bloody sign lifts up,
And shouts exulting from the mountain top!

* Preface to "Life of Harris," 1791.

† "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 296.

His voice the strongest holds of hell o'erturns,
 His word, as fire in the dry stubble burns,
 Impetuous as a torrent pours along,
 Or blasts like lightning the rebellious throng.
 Smote by his sling, and scatter'd by his eye,
 Goliath falls, and the Philistines fly ;
 Where'er he turns, appall'd with sudden dread
 Flies the foul monster, Vice, and hides his head ;
 Satan, with all his wicked spirits, gives place,
 And mourns his works destroy'd before the stripling's face.
 Who is the stripling ? (let my friend enquire,)
 So void of fear,—so full of heavenly fire ?
 Say, hast thou ever known him ?—search and try,
 And read his features with a curious eye ;
 Mark well his love, simplicity, and zeal,
 And tell thy heart—if thou be Harris still."

It would be difficult to conceive of any of the most heroic figures in history being apostrophized in more admiring terms. What terrific work amongst sinners must the early onsets of Harris have produced ! The following is part of another stanza in the same poem :—

" Then let our Saviour-God have all the praise,
 And humbly call to mind the former days,
 When He, who waked thy soul to second birth,
 Sent forth a new-born child to shake the earth,
 To tear the prey out of the lion's teeth,
 And spoil the trembling realms of hell and death ;
 By violent faith to seize the kingdom given,
 And open burst the gates of vanquished heaven."

The Rev. John Wesley was equally surprised at the cessation of Harris's itinerant work, but was enlightened on the subject when he heard the account from his friend's own lips. Writing in his journal under date, March 19, 1756, Mr. Wesley says :—" I rode over to Howell Harris at Trevecca, not knowing how to get any further ; but he helped us out of our difficulties, offering to send one with us who would show us the way and bring our horses back. Before I talked with him myself I wondered that he did not go out and preach as usual. But he informed me that he had preached until he

could do so no longer, his constitution being entirely broken. He was pressed in spirit to build a large house for the Lord. As soon as it was erected, men, women, and children came to him without his seeking them from all parts of Wales. I never heard, except in the case of the Orphan House at Halle, of so many signal interpositions of Divine providence."

Even the Rev. Daniel Rowlands would sometimes make enquiries. Meeting Evan Moses at Swansea in 1759, he asked why Mr. Harris did not go out to preach as of old. The faithful Moses, however, gave an unvarnished answer. "I told him," he wrote, "that if Mr. Harris were to come again amongst you, you would pull down what he put up, and put up again what he would pull down. And I told him that I believed God would show him that he had sinned in the Rupture, because he did not strike in with the Lord against the carnal spirit that had come into the work, and because he had opposed the preaching of the death of God."

In the year 1756 the peaceable monastic establishment at Trevecca was disturbed by rumours of war. About this time the kingdom was excited on account of a threatened invasion from France. A society known as The Breconshire Agricultural Society, presented an address to the King on the occasion, offering to form themselves into a troop of light horse to be ready to march at his majesty's command, and at their own expense, to any part of Great Britain, or in the event of this method of shewing their attachment to the throne not being approved, to dispose of their persons and fortunes in such a manner as the King, in his great wisdom, should think expedient.

Mr. Harris was as fully concerned about the welfare of the kingdom as any in the country; and having a religious motive for action in the danger to the Protestant succession implied in the menace of France, he came forward and proposed to the society—that if his majesty should accept of their offer, he would at his own expense furnish ten light

horsemen, completely armed and accoutred, to attend them as an addition to their troop ; that on the 20th of April, 1756, he would bring ten men to enlist on the then emergency, and the bounty-money allowed such recruits should be paid to the treasurer of the society, to be laid out by the members as they should think proper.*

The Agricultural Society's offer was not accepted ; but Mr. Harris raised a number of men at his own expense, and paid the government bounty into the hands of the society's treasurer, for which beneficent act the following order was entered in the minute book, " That Mr. Howell Harris be admitted an honorary member of this society, to be at no manner of expense whenever he attends these meetings, and to be treated by the President of the day, he having subscribed the sum of £14 12s. 6d. toward the fund, and in other respects appeared zealous for promoting the beneficial schemes of this society." †

The account given by Mr. Harris's successors is as follows:—

" This year, as the nation was engaged in war with France, Mr. Harris was in much concern lest our privileges and liberties should be taken away from us, especially the liberty of the Gospel, which, should the Papists succeed, we should be robbed of. He laid this matter therefore before the family, especially the young men, to know had any of them a willing mind and spirit to go to the service of our good King against popery ; entreating them to be earnest with the Lord in prayer for His aid and defence at this critical juncture. And soon after he had proposed this matter, many of them unanimously answered that they were willing and ready ; and it was then settled that five young men should go to the army. They went in faith and in the strength of the Lord, willing to lay down their lives for the liberty of the Gospel."

* " History of Breconshire," by T. Jones, i. 311.

† " Calvinistic Methodist Record," p. 254.

The effect of the religious training these Trevecca volunteers had received may be seen from the record of their travels and deeds written by their brethren of "The family."

"These five young men went from Trevecca to Hereford, where they joined the 58th regiment, and from thence to Plymouth, till orders came for them to embark for Ireland;* and as the heat of the war between us and the French was chiefly then in America, further orders came for that regiment to sail, so they embarked at Cork, and landed at Halifax in Nova Scotia. The first engagement they were in was at the siege and taking of Louisburg. The next enterprise they were in, under the command of brave General Wolf, who then lost his life, was the taking of Quebec, which with all the country is now in the possession of the English. The last place they took was Havana, from the Spaniards, which was the last blow in that notable war.

"The Lord Jesus was with their spirits in a surprising manner; they kept close together in watching and prayer, reading the Bible, exhorting one another and their fellow-soldiers. They wrote home from Quebec that they had the spirit of prayer and reliance upon the Lord, even in the heat of battle; 'because,' say they, 'we are in His care, and have entered upon this way of life for Him, fighting against popery in defence of our Gospel privileges.' Thus they were kept by our Saviour contented and happy in their spirits, and in their bodies also not receiving any material hurt.

"It is worthy of notice that four of those young men died a natural death in that part of the world. The fifth was taken prisoner by the French, and after being some weeks a prisoner in France, when peace was concluded he came to England, and had an offer of preferment, but chose rather to come home; so he came directly to Trevecca, where he was gladly received by all the family, after being absent seven years;

* For a further account of their departure, and of other matters connected with the Trevecca "Family," see *Traethodydd*, 1866, pp. 157--171.

but more especially as the Lord's presence was and has been with him, keeping him from the vice and wickedness which most commonly prevails in the army, and because he was also kept with the Lord in spirit, and brought a most pleasing account of them that finished their course, and of the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus to himself, and to them in all their trials."

The last mentioned of the five young men brought home with him a musket ball, which he carried about with him in his leg as a reminder of his dangers, but was notwithstanding very happy and contented, magnifying the faithfulness of God, and having much to say as an exhorter of the Lord's grace and goodness.

The Breconshire Agricultural Society, as its name implies, had for its primary object the improvement of husbandry in the County of Brecon. But it was proposed, in addition, to establish and develop the manufacture of woollen and linen goods, and thus encourage "a general habit of industry, by which and by which alone excess and sloth, the ruin of the health and morals of mankind, can be subdued, and which by its constant attendant, plenty, spreads content and happiness around. Industry, which magic-like can smooth the rugged mountain's brow, and call forth landscapes from the dreary waste! whose manifest and various gifts, as they would tire description to paint, so we shall only earnestly recommend them to those who have their country's good at heart." The foregoing passage, which was followed by a number of rules for the attainment of the object proposed, is an extract from the early records of the society; and reflects, according to Mr. Theophilus Jones, the historian of the county, equal honour to the head and the heart of the gentleman who framed it and the society that adopted it. Mr. Jones himself had been informed that the gentleman who framed it was a William Scourfield, Esq., but a more recent authority is of opinion that the writer of this passage from which the extract has

been given was the author of the famous treatise on "Money and Currency," the most celebrated work on trade and commerce previous to the time of Adam Smith. This author, who was a member of the society soon after its formation, had been and was then most intimately connected with the county of Brecon, and was none other than Joseph Harris, Esq., brother of Mr. Howell Harris, of Trevecca.*

Assuming this probable supposition to be true, it accounts for the interest the two brothers felt in the purpose and progress of the society—an interest evinced by the following extracts from letters sent by Mr. Joseph Harris to his brother at Trevecca :—

" London, Nov. 20th, 1756.

" Dear Brother,—I made all the enquiries I could about the disposition of your flannels, but I hope your people themselves have hit upon the very right mark, and that what hath been here settled will enable the gentlemen of the society to execute their laudable designs of employing the poor ; a design the most noble and beneficial to the whole country, and which will gain them the applause of all good men ; and it gives me no small satisfaction that a great share of this praise is due to you, which alleviates much my regret of being so little able to assist you.

" I was very sorry to hear that your journey with me somewhat fatigued you.

" Dear Brother,

" Yours most affectionately,

" JOSEPH HARRIS." ,

" London, 2nd April, 1757.

" Dear Brother,

I am very glad to hear that your own manufacturing goes on so well, and I hope it will prosper more and more for the general benefit of the country ; but I am sorry to hear that

* " Calvinistic Methodist Record," p. 254.

the society are so tardy in not attempting something for the benefit of the poor. Although I am not likely to come and live in your neighbourhood, yet I am in hope to have it in my power to come and see you oftener than I used to do. His majesty has been graciously pleased to grant me for life an additional allowance of £300 a year, and I am to have a deputy to assist me in the office. I expect my new Patent next week. I was in hopes of coming down this summer, but a coinage which we soon expect will prevent me.

“JOSEPH HARRIS.”

The foregoing passages from the correspondence of the distinguished Metropolitan Scientist, leave it undoubted, whether the economic features of the Agricultural Society's plans were due to his genius or not, that the generosity and large-heartedness of his brother Howell was a factor in its benevolent intentions. The society failed to keep pace with Mr. Howell Harris's temperament; but as there was nothing to prevent the execution of his design in his own locality, he began to correspond with scientists and experts in various parts of the country with the view of carrying out a scheme he had of making his Trevecca establishment a farm and labour colony, a reformatory, and a monastery all in one. The excellence of his intentions brought a speedy response to his enquiries, and the sleepy hamlet of Trevecca was made to resound with the din of various industries. In addition to all the branches of husbandry, which were carried forward upon an extensive scale, several farms being rented for the purpose, there were the operations of wool-spinning, dyeing, weaving, building, road-surveying, wood-felling, shoemaking, tailoring, and, to an extent that made Trevecca for many years one of the most important publishing establishments in South Wales, the business of printing as well. A few passages from the letters of Mr. Harris's correspondents will show the nature of the various enterprises, as well as the general purpose and efficiency of the Institution.

"Pont-y-pool, Nov. 4, 1758.

"Sir,—I hear you are a general undertaker. If you, by your people, will undertake the making a turnpike road I should be glad of a line, &c., &c.

"Yours, &c.,

"Mr. Howell Harris.

"CAPEL HANBURY."

"Croft Castle, near Leominster,

"July 13, 1767.

"Sir,—The very high reputation you have of having artificers and labourers of every sort in the highest perfection, and your great readiness in recommending them, occasions you this trouble, and induces me though a stranger to beg your kind assistance about a bailiff, a person perfectly skilled in husbandry, one that has a great deal of experience, and upon whose judgment, &c., &c. I want a person of real skill, knowledge, and honesty, and from your general character I can apply nowhere so properly as to you.

"Yours, &c.,

"Mr. Howell Harris.

"THOS. JOHNES."

"Garth, June 19, 1768.

"Dear Sir,—I have a little job of work to do that I am informed your man Roberts can effectually finish in a couple of days. I therefore should esteem it a favour if you will be kind enough to spare him some time this week, as I will prepare everything for him to-morrow.

"Yours, &c.,

"Mr. Howell Harris.

"MDKE. GWYNNE."

"Bristol, 16 Sept., 1769.

"Dear Sir,—I very badly want a person who understands the farming business. Can you help me or send me one of your farmers for a year, or till I can get one who is a servant

of Jesus. I must and will insist on paying him to the full for His labours.

“ Mr. H. Harris.

“ Yours, &c.,

“ J. IRELAND.”

The foregoing extracts touch upon the industrial features of the establishment ; the following reveal its charitable and reformatory character :—

“ Menevia, March 9, 1755.

“ Dear Father,

“ The four men I have sent you are carnal men. I commit them and their maintenance and all necessities belonging to the farm to your care. If you think proper to send Thomas David along with them for some time he may have authority over their spirits.

“ Mr. H. Harris.

“ EVAN ROBERTS.”

“ Trevecca, Oct. 24, 1756.

“ This day se’night the bearer’s husband called here in your name for employment for some days, and to show my real regard to you I immediately employed him.

“ Charles Powell, Esq.

“ HOWELL HARRIS.”

“ Penbont, March 13, 1758.

“ Sir,—The bearer is my principal workman’s wife. She has brought her daughter in hopes you will take her into your family for some time. The motive is the infinite concern given her father by her disposition to pilfer. She being so young I presume may be reclaimed. The father is both able and willing to satisfy you for her diet. Your benevolent disposition has induced me to take this liberty of recommendation.

“ Yours, &c.,

“ Mr. Howell Harris.

“ E. WILLIAMS.”

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SOLDIER

TURNING from the occasional inmates of the Trevecca Institution to its more settled and permanent members, we have recourse once more to the account given by Harris's first biographers. "In the year 1756," they write, "our Saviour began to gather some fruit from His little garden at Trevecka. Some souls departed very happily to eternity, praising and testifying of Jesus how dear and precious He was to them in their dying moments; and that they beheld eternity bright and glorious before them through the blood of Christ; blessing Him for His love and grace and for having brought them to Trevecka, where they found edification for their souls. This afforded much comfort and joy to them that were yet left here below in this vale of misery, seeing their dear brethren and sisters depart strong in faith to their eternal home.

"In the year 1757 many people continued to come to Trevecka, though many also went away after being there for a while. In this and the two following years above forty persons died in the family, which in some sense was a great loss and seemingly a forerunner of some change amongst us; but the blessing which attended their departure made this loss a great gain, not only to them that died but to the living also; --seeing the Lord's grace and faithfulness to them in their last moments, enabling them to triumph over death and all their enemies.

"Of the persons who died in those years there were some

children from seven to twelve years old, mostly of the small-pox. Some of the children praised the Lord in a surprising manner, testifying 'that they loved Him because He suffered and died for them.' Mr. Harris also was powerfully enabled to pray with many of them in their dying moments. And we are living witnesses of this, that the Spirit of the Lord was present, comforting and removing the fear of death from them, which some of them at first sorely complained of; but they then longed to behold His face and be for ever with Him."

About the spring of the year 1759 Mr. Harris himself writes, "The Word has been preached here I trust with power and authority three times a day, and four times every Sunday these seven years. Surely I can say that this is the Lord's work, for He has hitherto been pleased to own it by trying and keeping people here, and by giving me a spirit of faith to stand in the face of my own and others' sins and many other impossibilities. He hath honoured us in standing by and protecting us amidst many heavy storms that indeed would have defeated all natural strength and overturned all that was not built on the Rock. Here, therefore, I can set up an Ebenezer, and say, 'Thus far the Lord hath helped me.' This is the Lord's doing; this work was founded, carried on, and supported by the Lord, and that by His free grace, and not by the wisdom and policy of any man, nor by the arm of flesh; and though Satan would be glad to destroy it, yet it remains standing and flourishing in spite of all difficulties from without, and sin, divisions, and rebellions within."

Towards the end of the year 1759 the nation was again alarmed with a threatened invasion from France, and Mr. Harris was appealed to for assistance once more in raising men for the defence of the kingdom. His own brother, Mr. Joseph Harris, in particular was solicitous upon the subject, and in a letter he wrote he touched upon his "well-known zeal in the service of the King and country," and urged that he "needed no other inducement to do his utmost in the defence

of both than the bare consideration of the danger they were all exposed to at this critical juncture, with an incensed, powerful, and merciless enemy watching only for the opportunity of landing a formidable force upon our coasts."

Before the close of the year all the leading gentlemen of Breconshire exerted themselves in forming a county militia; and as several of them intended acting as officers, they pressed a commission upon Mr. Howell Harris as well, requesting him at the same time to bring with him a contingent of his men to serve in the ranks. The offer was entirely foreign to the bent of Harris's mind and his life-long pursuits; but as he was by no means deficient in martial courage, and was still haunted by fear for the welfare of Protestantism, and had already, as he writes, "imperilled his life for many years in preaching the Gospel, he was not now to be intimidated by the prospect of having to die if occasion required in the defence of it; at the same time if he undertook as a soldier to fight for King George, he must have liberty to preach the Gospel of King Jesus."

The condition of liberty to preach being consented to, Mr. Harris replied that he must further lay the matter before the Lord in prayer; which being done, he became "fully persuaded in his mind that the Spirit of God who sent him at first to preach the Word in an uncommon manner, would send him now in the like extraordinary way to defend it, and to offer his life for the truth he preached and the liberty we enjoy in this kingdom." The question was now laid before the whole family for the purpose of making it the subject of united prayer, the result being that all consented Mr. Harris should go, believing it to be the will of God. The outcome was exceedingly gratifying to Mr. Joseph Harris, who wrote from London to Trevecca to say "that the raising of the county militia afforded a fresh instance of that laudable spirit of true patriotism for which his countrymen for some time had been remarkably distinguished," adding, "I think great praise is

due to you in particular for entering voluntarily into a state of life so very different from what you have been used to and from your inclinations, excepting for the good you can do, which I hope will be much."

It was natural that the mind of Harris should be in some degree excited by his new departure. He was however acting according to the dictates of conscience, and was therefore prepared for any event. The following extract from a letter written January 3, 1760, to the Rev. Griffith Jones, Llanddowror, his early friend and adviser, reveals the state of his mind :—

"From an apprehension of our danger at this time from the tyrannical spirit of popery, I have accepted a call to go with some honest people that are here with me in family into our militia, to finish my labours and life, if God please, in withstanding our enemies in the field of blood,—a life by far the most disagreeable to my nature. But by the faithful Spirit of grace being persuaded of my duty, I am willing to testify once for all my regard to my King and country; and let Him who bled for me and whose I am do with me as seemeth good in His sight. Commending myself and mine in the most earnest manner to your prayers, and wishing you all the blessings of the New Covenant, the precious fruits of our Saviour's life, sufferings, and death, with eternal healings in and under the Redeemer's wings."

The real tension of Harris's mind on this momentous occasion may best be seen from the following glowing encomium on the Word of God which he penned about this time. "I am resolutely and coolly determined to go freely and conscientiously, and die in the field of battle in defence of the precious Word of God, the Bible, against Popery. Who can sufficiently set forth the value of a Book wherein God speaks, and that to all ranks, degrees, ages, and languages of men? Who can set it forth in its own real and majestic glory? O the infinite and unfathomable depth of glory and Divine wis-

dom and love in it ! The glory of the sun is nothing in comparison to the glory of this valuable treasure, which is indeed the mouth and image of God drawn by Himself. A Book which He has made the standard, touchstone, and rule to try even His own work by ; whereby all spirits, doctrine, ministry, and church discipline, all faith, love, truth, and obedience are proved ! A Book that God has referred all men to from the monarch to the peasant,—the universal teacher of all men ! Here is the seed whence the Church and her faith are begotten, and herein is she purified and nursed. Here is the believer's armoury ; herein is the true ineffable light of the world ; herein the unerring Father and Teacher of all speaks both to young and old, high and low, rich and poor ; here man's pride is humbled, his wounds searched, the Saviour revealed and declared to be made ours.

“ If life and its various comforts and necessities are vastly dear, how much more should this Treasure be ? Without it there is no faith nor salvation. By this we know what could not be known by any other way or means, and that with the greatest certainty, both of God and of ourselves, of present and future existence. Without this all is uncertain, and thick darkness ; this alone speaks infallibly and calls for implicit faith. O that its glory may fill this nation. Happy the man that shall be counted worthy to show forth this universal Teacher in its own uncovered majesty. It would be an unspeakable service both to God and man, and would defeat all hell, and cut its way through all difficulties ; and as the infinity and majesty of God, its Author, will gradually be displayed to our hearts, so will this His vicegerent on earth, this, His manner of speaking to us, be perpetually more intelligible and precious.

“ O the ineffable Treasure ! No wonder so many thousands triumphed in dying for the precious Bible ! Now I go freely, without compulsion, to show the regard I have for the privileges, especially the precious Gospel of our Saviour, contained

in the whole Book of God, which now is openly read throughout the kingdom, every person being suffered to exhort his neighbour without molestation. I commit my family to the Lord, and am going with a part of it, who freely offered their lives on this occasion, to defend our nation and privileges, and to show publickly that we are dead to all things here below, or at least that we can part with all for the sake of our dear Lord and Saviour, even with life itself, and that we seek a city above."

Mr. Harris now made the necessary arrangements at Trevecca. The Institution and its affairs was delivered to the hands of trustees; Evan Moses and one or two others were appointed to assume the command during his absence, and then with twenty-four men of the family, twelve of whom he undertook to provide with arms, accoutrements, clothing, and maintenance all at his own expense for three years, he incorporated with the Breconshire militia, in the early part of the year 1760, being invested at first with the office of an ensign, from which he was soon promoted to the rank of captain.

The number of the family he left at Trevecca was over one hundred and twenty. The parting of Harris and his men with these was necessarily painful; but all were perfectly resigned, even those wives whose husbands were among the recruits "resolving to cleave to the Lord by giving themselves wholly to Him, believing that He would take care of them."

The first route Captain Harris and his men had to take was to Yarmouth, in the early part of 1760. Passing through Abergavenny on his way, he at once put his resolve of not allowing the Christian minister and reformer to be lost in the soldier into practice, and discoursed with acceptance in the market-place of that town; after which he wrote his first letter, dated Feb. 25, to the family at Trevecca, in order to strengthen them in the love of God, and urge a due subordination to those in authority at the Institute.

Passing through Bedford he had some conference with Mr.

Okely, a leading Moravian of the place, upon the feasibility of once again uniting the Moravian and Methodist forces. Mr. Okely, who wrote to him after his departure, mentioned that his testimony at Bedford had met with acceptance among the awakened, and respect in general; "Though," he adds, "you may be sure there will be always some to object and scan the whole life of so extraordinary a preacher as you are."

"On his arrival at Yarmouth Mr. Harris enquired if there were any Methodists in the town. He was informed that attempts had been made to preach there, but that the preacher had very narrowly escaped violent death from enraged mobs. Nothing daunted by this intelligence, he employed the town-crier to give notice, that on such a day at such an hour a Methodist preacher would discourse at the market-place. At the time appointed a large mob collected together, furnished with stones, brick-bats, bludgeons, blood, and filthy material suited to the work of obstruction, vowing that if the preacher came he should never go out of the town alive. Mr. Harris, who had been exercising his men at a little distance, when the clock struck went to the multitude and enquired what was the matter. They replied that a Methodist preacher was to have come, but that it was well he did not, for he certainly would have been killed. Mr. Harris told them that he thought it a pity they should be wholly disappointed, and that if they would favour him with their attention he would sing a hymn and pray with them, and also give them a little friendly advice. He then mounted the table which had been prepared for him—his men, who surrounded him with their arms, joining him most devoutly in singing and prayer. The novelty of the scene and the presence of the armed men who were ready to defend their officer and their friend, struck terror into the mob and prevented the execution of their wicked designs. Mr. Harris preached with little interruption; the hearts of many of the hearers were softened, and prejudices vanished. Some were awakened

to a serious concern for their souls, and led to enquire how they might be saved. From that time Mr. Harris preached almost every evening, generally in his regimentals, to crowded congregations with increased effect. After a time he requested the preachers in the neighbourhood to come to Yarmouth and form a society. This was accordingly done, and the people were thus gathered from the world, who evinced their gratitude both to God and man. A commodious chapel was built by a gentleman of the town, which was not only well attended but in which many were persuaded to walk in the ways of God."*

The success of Mr. Harris at Yarmouth, where he continued for several months, was a great consolation. He wrote home, Aug. 21, 1760, informing his friends that the Lord in His goodness had blessed his word in a remarkable manner, and asking them to rejoice in that their loss had redounded to the good of many. The following winter he returned by way of Chester with his company to Brecon; and, as on his outward progress, he availed himself during the return of every opportunity of preaching the Gospel in the towns through which he passed.

It is supposed by the historian of Welsh Methodism that it was during the stay of the battalion at Brecon in the winter of 1760-61, Harris made those flitting excursions into a few parts of the Principality when he quelled the insolence of opposition by displaying his regimentals. As he had now fallen back upon his early practice of preaching in the open air, his meetings were occasionally interrupted. Finding that silence was not forthcoming when demanded in the name of the King of Heaven, he would suddenly unsheath his sword, place it naked on the table before him, throw off his cloak so as to exhibit his military uniform, and then commanding attention in the name of King George of Great Britain would

* "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," vol. 48, pp. 308, 9; "Life of Wesley," by Tyerman, vol. ii. p. 555.

proceed without interruption to the end of his discourse. He found this a convenient method of awing disturbers, and there is a tradition that he resorted to it at several places.

Leaving Brecon after a considerable stay, Captain Harris and his men are quartered in the summer of 1761 in the West of England. From Bideford he writes the following letter to the Rev. John Wesley, with the aim once more of bringing the Moravians and the Methodists into harmony.

“ Bideford, June 26th, 1761.

“ Dear Mr. Wesley,

“ I am answering by this post a kind and humble letter I received the other day, from Mr. Johannes, in reply to mine from Yarmouth. I thought it my duty, as matters will not permit him to stay in England further than the beginning of July, to send you this letter, hoping it will be possible for you to see him before he goes; and if the meeting would be at Bristol, perhaps providence would open a door for me to have the pleasure of being present to see the most agreeable sight in the world—brethren looking each other in the face in truth, old love revived, and the cause of distance and former jealousy removed, Satan disappointed, and the love and humility of the Saviour prevailing over all misunderstanding; and a generous regard for the universal good of the whole English Reformation bearing down all lesser considerations whatsoever. He seemed through the whole of his epistle to be really poor in spirit and without guile, and sincerely disposed to any general conference. He appears to be without any partial view to his own plan and brethren, declaring positively that he esteems everyone who honours the Saviour’s sufferings and seeks salvation by His blood as a brother indeed, though he belongs to another denomination; and he declares further that if he can do anything for his Master’s interest and the soul’s happiness, he is ready for it, wishing that the whole earth may be covered with the knowledge of the Redeemer

and His atoning blood. God can do great things ; His cause, His name, His people, His work, and His servants, are in Him *one*. Let us on earth then endeavour to imitate those in heaven, where there is but one tongue, one language, one happiness, one life, and where all make but one family. The nearer we all come to the same mind, and the more we grow up in a likeness to our Great Head, the more we shall convince the poor, blind world that we are of Him indeed, whose will is expressly revealed and made known to all on this head. This spirit of bearing and forbearing would be the glory of our church ; and this great work, the late revival, was ushered in by this heaven-born spirit ; and if continued in it, it will flourish and prove a blessing to thousands now and many in future generations ; all that now walk in the light by it have personal happiness.

“ What will not a heaven-born soul do or suffer for one truth ? And what should we not be willing to do for the love of the brethren, while we endeavour to unite the scattered parts of the glorious body of our exalted Lord ? If the attempt is great, great will he be who is first in the motion ; and it will be great in you if, as an unshaken son of the old Church of England and of primitive Christianity, you can invite Mr. Johannes to give you the meeting, to remove, if possible, misunderstanding and mutual jealousies, and come to some terms of friendship. And happy will it be if he, in the same spirit, accepts of the sincere English invitation. I should be exceedingly glad to know, if possible, when and where you are likely to meet, that, if I could not be favoured with being present, I might all that time bow the knee before the dear Lord and Master, praying that He Himself would, as thousands are concerned, be present to help in taking such steps as might best promote His interest and glory in this fallen and yet favoured nation. Such is the humble supplication of your most unworthy brother and servant,

“ HOWELL HARRIS.”

The following note to Mr. Charles Wesley accompanied the above :—

“ June 20th, 1761.

“ My dear old Friend,

“ You see my end by the contents of the enclosed letter, which I beg leave to forward to your brother through you, as I do not know where he is just now. I trust an interview between your brother, yourself, and Mr. Johannes, who is now in London, and some others, may greatly promote our Saviour's interest in this nation. I am persuaded your real regard to unity and the general good will make you not only forward the enclosed immediately to your brother, but also endeavour to hasten the interview. And if anything of that kind be settled, I beg the favour of a line as soon as you can, that if possible I might have the blessing of being present at such a meeting, where I believe our Saviour would much display His grace. This is the coming of His kingdom ; this is honouring Him indeed, by coming together as near as possible ; removing misunderstandings and jealousies, so as to leave an opening for those of all parties that love our beloved Redeemer and His cause to come in likewise.

“ Why may not such concessions be made, and such toleration of spirit be showed, that all the evangelical friends of the Church may be invited to some union or nearness together ? Then all might be better acquainted with each other, and with what our great Master and Builder is doing among His various classes of labourers everywhere. And then all hearts will be enlarged towards Him and His great cause here in the world.”

The tender and catholic tone of these letters is in perfect accord with Harris's spirit throughout. A man of indomitable courage, he was also essentially a man of peace, and this is now not the first instance in which he interposes with his friends for the purpose of promoting co-operation and love.

In the meantime, the affairs at Trevecca were progressing harmoniously. Notwithstanding many trials from within and

without, the family had a happy experience of the Divine goodness. They were conscious also of being owned before the world as the Lord's people, which was a matter of great joy, as affording an answer to the reproach with which they had been taunted of worshipping Harris instead of their God. The preaching services also and other meetings, as well as the outward industries, were kept up unhindered, except by two severe fits of sickness. One of those attacks, happening as it did in the time of harvest, was a severe strain upon the labour resources of the establishment, no fewer than fifty persons being prostrate at the same time, and even some of those that were in authority in the family; "yet the Lord brought us through even at this season, so that everything turned out well; and indeed the sick and the healthy had a happy time, the presence of the Son of God being amongst us, who made this bitter cup sweet to the whole family."

Without tracing in detail the further movements of Captain Harris and his men, or even making the briefest extracts from the letters that passed in streams between him and his wife and others whom he had left at Trevecca, it must suffice to say that in August, 1763, we find him in London, and present at a Conference held in the chapel at Spitalfields. The "Methodist Magazine" for 1804, p. 209, contains an account from the pen of the Rev. J. Pawson, an excellent Wesleyan minister who was present, of the visit of Harris to this gathering. Mr. Pawson styles him "The faithful servant of God—the Welsh Apostle," and writes thus:—"He exhorted us to have faith in God and to speak a word for Him wherever we came, especially when we met anyone on the road. 'If I meet a poor man,' said he, 'I give him a half-penny, if I have one. I always consider that a man has a soul as well as a body, and therefore I say something to him respecting his eternal salvation. And if I meet a rich man, why should I be afraid of him? For anything I know he may be worse than the beast he rides; perhaps the beast carries the

devil upon its back.' To encourage us to trust in God under all difficulties he added, ' I had at one time or another visited or assisted the poor or afflicted until I had contracted a debt of two hundred pounds. I however borrowed the money from a friend ; but he in a little time wanted it for himself, and was under the necessity of desiring it to be returned. I was in very great distress, as I neither could pay the money myself, nor procure it from anyone else at the time. I, being in this situation, kneeled down and made my request known to our blessed Saviour. I simply and reverently told Him my trouble, and the cause of it. I said most humbly, O Lord, Thou knowest that I have not spent any part of this money upon myself ; I gave the whole of it to Thy servants—the sick and the poor ; and Thou hast said in Thy holy Word that "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord ; and that which he hath given, will He pay him again." Now then, O Lord, I have in faith lent Thee two hundred pounds, and I now most humbly claim the promise, and expect Thee most graciously to repay me, as Thou knowest that I am distressed from want of it. It is surprising, I had no sooner made my request known to God than a gentleman farmer knocked at my door. He, upon entering into my house, asked, "Is not your name Harris?" I replied, Yes, Sir. He said, "Do not you visit and relieve the poor sometimes?" I answered, Yes, I do, when I have something to relieve them with. He replied, "Providence has been kind to me of late, and prospered me very much ; here are two hundred pounds ; if you will be so kind as to dispose of this sum for me I shall be obliged to you." I returned the gentleman my most sincere thanks, gratefully took the money, paid my debts, and praised the Lord most cordially for His condescending mercy and love.' This I heard from Mr. Harris's own lips."

Pawson mentions another incident that happened at the same Conference. "Some of the preachers began to call in question the power Mr. Wesley exercised over the societies.

But Mr. Harris pleaded his cause effectually, and among other things said, 'If Mr. Wesley should at any time abuse his power, who will weep for him if his own children will not.' These simple words had an astonishing effect upon the minds of the preachers. They were all in tears on every side, and gave up the matter entirely." *

The Conference being ended, Mr. Wesley set out on the 15th August for the Principality of Wales, and four days later becomes a guest for the night at the Settlement at Trevecca. He records his impressions in the following words :—"Howell Harris's house is one of the most elegant places which I have seen in Wales. The little chapel and all things round about it are finished with uncommon taste, and the gardens, orchards, fish-ponds, and mount adjoining make the place a little paradise. He thanks God for these things and looks through them. About six score persons are now in the family; all diligent, all constantly employed; all fearing God and working righteousness."†

Taking his departure from Trevecca, Aug. 20, Mr. Wesley continues :—"We took horse at four in the morning, and rode through one of the pleasantest countries in the world. I will be bold to say, all England does not afford such a line of fifty miles length for fields, meadows, woods, brooks, and gently rising mountains, fruitful to the very top."

The evidence afforded by the above extract to the piety and discipline prevailing at the Institution is a striking proof of the influence Harris's previous regulations and character had exerted. He had severely trained his family in the practices of devotion and order, and now in his temporary absence they could hardly fail to maintain the most constant discipline, supported as they were by the recollection of so bright an example.

It would be tedious to enlarge upon further particulars re-

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, pp. 122, 3.

† "Life of Wesley," by Tyerman, ii. 480.

lating to this period, such as the details of a court-martial over which Captain Harris presided at Brecon, the instructions he received from time to time in reference to drum-beating, parade, mounting guard, the treatment of deserters, and other items of military discipline; we shall therefore conclude this chapter by remarking that after he had been three years in the militia, a treaty of peace was concluded, and Captain Harris laid down his commission. During the whole of that period his character for sanctity was rigidly maintained, and his influence for good was of the highest order. He succeeded in engaging some of the higher military officials in correspondence upon a nobler warfare than that of carnal weapons; and not long after his promotion to the rank of captain, received from Sir Edward Williams, the colonel of his regiment, the following testimonial to the efficient discharge of his professional duties:—

“Captain Harris,—I have no time to do justice to the behaviour of your men; but in a few words I assure you, that in every respect their conduct does credit to the religious principles you have taken so much pains to instil into them.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE COLLEGE

HAVING laid down his commission in the militia, the remainder of Mr. Harris's life was spent, with the exception of an occasional preaching excursion to some parts of England or Wales, in the seclusion of his home and in the affection of his family at Trevecca, and in the endeavour to enter himself, and lead others to follow, more deeply, into the heavenly spirit of which he had in so great a measure already partaken.

His attachment to the Established Church remained unshaken, notwithstanding the unkind treatment he had received at the hands of some of its officials in times past, and the persistent refusal of its men in authority to admit him to the ranks of its ministry. He had moreover infused the same spirit of veneration for its sublime and time-honoured liturgy and service into the hearts of those who resided with him at the Institution. One of them wrote, that "as the late Revival in religion began in the Established Church, we think it not necessary or prudent to separate ourselves from it, but our duty to abide in it and go to our parish church every Sunday to join in the prayers, to hear the reading of God's Word, and to use the ordinances; we find that our Saviour meets us there by making them a blessing to our souls."

In accordance with the sentiment of the above citation, one of the first concerns of Mr. Harris after leaving the regiment was to request an accommodation with the vicar of the parish to have the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered

once a month instead of only four times in the year, as had till then been the custom. During the three years Mr. Harris was a military officer his old opponent, the Rev. Pryce Davies, whom he had written to as a youth upon the same subject, had passed away from the incumbency of the parish of Talgarth, and his place was now occupied by his successor -- the Rev. William Davies. This latter clergyman seemed of an obliging disposition, readily complied with Mr. Harris's desire, and began the monthly Sacrament on Sunday, Feb. 5, 1764, —a favour concerning which Mr. Harris wrote:—"This was a great day indeed; the first time that we had the communion according to our wish and request. And this privilege has been given us in answer to our prayer, and is a further open proof of our Saviour's love to us. We were happy in the morning in exhorting, and went happily together to the public service, and I trust in one spirit to the Lord's Table."

On the 19th of the same month another boon was conferred. "Our people sat for the first time in the gallery of our church to sing, which they afterwards continued to do. While the people were singing, such glory fell on me,—and I thought it filled the church,—as words cannot express. We were happy in this and many other respects at Trevecca, having our public and private meetings daily; the latter we had on Sunday before going to church and after we returned, without molestation." And thus the peaceful days and heavenly Sabbaths, faint emblems of the unimaginable calm of eternity, glided on, nature with its entrancing solitude in sympathy around, God in secure possession of the soul within, and every movement sanctified by the united devotions of the family, to which in the course of every twenty-four hours they were summoned three times, the first call to prayer being issued before the appearance of dawn.*

The deep tranquility of Harris's mind at the present period, united to his affectionate and peace-loving nature, rendered the idea of division between the various branches into which

* "Williams's Elegy."

the Methodist camp was now broken up, more painful than ever. He had sought to heal the breach at the outset, and for the past quarter of a century had manfully endeavoured to realize his ideal of presenting to the world a compact and united front, as the most convincing argument in favour of the Divine origin of the work. He did not probably cling with the same tenacity to the idea of an outward amalgamation; but he still adhered to the possibility of a fusion of hearts, and as the Countess of Huntingdon, whose chapels in London, Brighton, and other places he now regularly supplied, had long been in sympathy with him upon the matter, they began to correspond again upon the subject. Writing to him from Bristol, March 14, 1764, she says: "I cannot thank you enough for your kind care of my little bit of the vineyard. Poor as it is the Lord may increase and enlarge it. I rely with great joy on Mr. Peter Williams being with me before the 25th instant. I thank you also for the distant hope of seeing you some time in the summer. I have had respect to what you say about a heart-union among the several ministers. I hope to have a few of them here to-morrow morning on the subject. Mr. Wesley seems more hearty on that point than ever I have known him, and before he goes I hope to obtain a commission from him to declare his willingness for a general union founded upon the essential points, namely, faith in Jesus Christ, salvation of sinners by His blood and righteousness,—this being the centre of union for all, other points being left for private consideration in their several charges. We shall have your prayers and faithful and united labours for this; and any intelligence or advice you may give on this subject, I beg you will communicate freely to me."

The following extract from the "Life and Times of the Countess" * alludes probably to the present year:—"Mr. H. Harris, who had been with Lady Huntingdon at Brighton, now returned to London, where he was most kindly received

* Vol. ii. p. 1.

by Lord Dartmouth, Lady Gertrude Hotham, Mrs. Gartaret, and Mrs. Cavendish. At their houses he often expounded with successful ability, and after preaching several times at the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court-road Chapel, he visited Bath, and preached at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, expounding also at Lord Buchan's and at other houses. At her ladyship's request, he spoke to the Revs. Hart, Jones, Johnson, and Jesse, appointing them to meet her at Bath in the month of May." Before the end of the year Mr. Harris preaches again in London, and in a letter from the Countess dated Dec. 5th, he receives the following testimony to the effect of his labours:—"You were much blessed amongst us, and in private conference with the people there is no ministry so suited to the heart as yours."

The same profound regard, based on eminent piety and service, breathes in subsequent letters. Writing to Harris, January 15, 1765, the Countess mentions the College she intended founding, and then adds: "We look upon you as under engagement, if the Lord permit, the first week in June, as I hope to be in the wilds of Sussex then. I find none so ready and willing to hold up my poor weak hands as yourself. A thousand, thousand heartfelt thanks for the prayers at Trevecca." Again, in a letter from Brighton, March 17 of the same year, she says:—"We go on well here. I should nevertheless be very glad of your company, and that as soon as it is convenient to you. Things of various kinds arise abroad and home, which I should be glad to talk over with you. Many souls want you here. Fresh doors are opening, and the B—— begin to give me trouble; but matters of more moment advance, and that so far that I should be glad to see you. Do, my good friend, come as soon as you can, and stay as long as you can. Pray for me. I really have found blessings through your prayers." *

Writing to the Countess from Trevecca, Nov. 11, 1765, Harris says:—

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, chap. xvi,

“Honoured Madam,

“Last week I received your favour, by which I found our Saviour honoured you with a little of the feeling of what He went through when a poor man here below. We are too little acquainted with Him in all His humiliation by that revelation of faith, or by drinking of the cup that makes us feel what He went through all His life from Satan, and from hard unbroken spirits that did not know Him, but only judged by outward appearance. He leads us gradually to view the mystery of His Person, sufferings, and glory; and it is only in our spirits that we can know what He went through when He cried, ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and this we must know feelingly if risen again to reign with Him. Our nature may be brought by a superficial knowledge of Him, and by common illumination, to do and be active for Him; but to love the Cross, to suffer with Him, and to follow Him through the streets of Jerusalem, from Gethsemane to Golgotha, dumb without opening His mouth, is what we like to see painted in affecting images to work on our passions, but is what we are too little acquainted with in our spirits. I had a feeling of your trials, and also a spirit to lay them on Him for whom you suffer, who will not only support you in them, but will show you they are your crown and make them so easy that you will esteem them exceeding light, considering what He went through, and what millions of bright and glorious spirits now before His throne went through, and the great weight of glory He has in store for us after we have suffered awhile. Our trials are gentle fires. He corrects in order to purge our unseen self that we know nothing of.

“I am, in the best bonds,

“Your ladyship’s most obedient, humble servant,

“HOWELL HARRIS.”

Another letter to her ladyship, still from Trevecca, and dated Sept. 26th, 1766, runs thus:—

“Honoured Madam,

“The fellowship I have with your spirit in the knowledge of the humiliation and sufferings of that dear mysterious Man, our dear Lord and God, Jesus Christ, draws my pen to paper. Though we may mistake and lose sight of the real and honest meaning of each other’s spirits for a moment during this very short time of our trial and imperfection, yet the secret feeling of love we have by the Holy Spirit survives all. Go on and prosper in all your well-meant zeal to awaken a sleepy nation, to prepare for the glory of God’s amazing appearance to judge His rebellious worms; who came in a mean human form to purge away our sin and misery by the sacrifice of Himself. O this wonderful sacrifice! How blind and unaffected are we towards that mysterious fountain opened on the Cross! O the depth of our fall, that we can think or hear that God became a Man, shed His infinitely pure and Holy Blood to wash us in that only purifying fountain, and not feel every moment an age till we behold His face! What is all within and without but this? This is the uniting point and centre of all union. Here we forget all names and prejudices, and can truly think of nothing, but love, adore, wonder, and be happy. I trust your ladyship is well acquainted with these things by frequent reflections. I can through grace testify that this is my life for thirty years; and all life but this is only self in some shape or other. All that live out of themselves on this great Atonement are dear to me; and so I am persuaded are such to you also. To bring all to this point is, by grace, and ever has been my sole business with my fellow-creatures; and I know it is yours. But as all our Saviour’s matters as to outward form are now in a kind of confusion, each must be persuaded in his own mind of his own circle and work, and stand firm to his post till we more clearly see our great Saviour’s meaning in all His various forms and appearances, or meet above, where we shall sing one song, and but one, and that most loudly, Worthy is the Lamb.

"I am, with a heart full of cries that your bow may ever abide in strength,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"HOWELL HARRIS."

The foregoing epistles and extracts reveal a wonderful harmony between the sentiments and Christian activity of Harris and the Countess. He sympathized with her every enterprise; and when her ladyship in addition to her many endeavours at home began to contemplate the propagation of the Gospel abroad, the idea of starting out himself as a missionary to distant lands was seriously entertained by Harris, and would have been put into execution but for the equally urgent claims of his native Principality.*

In the month of November, 1766, he is with the Countess at Bath. He there meets Sir Charles Hotham, and the Rev. Henry Venn, Vicar of Huddersfield, who both return with him to Wales, and for a few days become his guests at the Institute. Mr. Venn records his impressions thus:—"From Bath through Bristol and Gloucester we arrived at Trevecca in Wales. Happy Trevecca! Howell Harris is the father of the Settlement, and its founder. After labouring for fifteen years more vigorously than any of the servants of Christ in this revival, he was so hurt in body as to be confined to his own house for seven years. Upon the beginning of his confinement first one and then another whom the Lord converted under his word, to the number of near a hundred, came and desired to live with him, and said that they would work and get their bread. By this means one hundred and twenty men, women, and children from very distant parts of Wales came and fixed their tents at Trevecca. We were there three days and heard their experience, which they spoke in Welsh to Mr. Harris, and he interpreted to us. Of all the people I have ever seen this society seems to be most advanced in grace. They spoke as men and women who feel themselves every

* Life by Morgan; pp. 241, 254.

moment worthy of eternal punishment and infinitely base; and yet at the same time they have such certainty of salvation through the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, as is indeed delightful to behold. My heart received a blessing which will abide with me." *

After various preaching excursions of no particular moment, we find Mr. Harris in August of the year 1767, in company with Mr. Whitfield at a Wesleyan Conference that was held in London. The fact has been mentioned † as rendering that Conference note-worthy, amongst other things, as "showing the harmony that existed among the leaders of the three sections into which Methodism had been divided,—the Wesleys at the head of the largest body, Whitfield the chief of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, and Howell Harris the prince of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales."

Amongst the many schemes contemplated by the Countess of Huntingdon for the propagation and advancement of religion, there was one she had for some time been regarding with favour, namely, the establishing of a theological college for training of young men in the immediate work of the ministry. The locality fixed upon for the founding of her ladyship's theological seminary was Trevecca; and this at once is suggestive of the influence of Harris. He had early longed for some method of adding to the mental equipment of his own exhorters, and had taught some of them at his own expense; and now that the requirements of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion demanded a trained ministry, it is likely, as is conjectured by one of Harris's biographers, § that the idea of the college originated with him. At any rate her ladyship corresponded with him upon the subject as early as Jan., 1765, decided upon Trevecca as the locality, and in 1767 rented from him a venerable building that was within a few hundred yards from his own establishment. This ancient structure,

* "Venn's Life," pp. 121—22; "Life and Time of Countess of Huntingdon," i. p. 482. † "Tyerman's Wesley," ii. 610.

§ Life by Morgan, p. 242.

according to Mr. Theophilus Jones,* was built in the year 1576, by a lady of the name of Rebecca Prosser, from whose Christian name the present euphonious designation of the hamlet, namely, Trevecca, meaning Rebecca's abode, has been derived. The building was placed under repair for the purpose intended under the supervision of Mr. Harris, as may be seen from the following communication from the Countess, dated, London, Feb. 22, 1768.

"My present great undertaking may, owing to my affliction, appear strange to the natural eye. But I have nothing to do with myself, but with the Lord,—look to Him, begging only His light and truth to lead and save me from any reproach in life or conduct in His matters. I know your prayers; will you all unite for me in this point, so important to the honour of our Saviour's faith? Both I, Prichard, and E. Roberts think the work cannot be finished for the furniture before June. I therefore conclude the opening of the school must be delayed until the end of August. I shall be glad to have an exact account of all the expenses as they go on. I shall remit money for supplying—into Mr. Wilson's hands, which by your bills or drafts on some one in Bristol may be obtained."†

The urgent need for a theological seminary such as the Countess was now establishing for the education of pious evangelical ministers and clergymen, received a telling emphasis in March, 1768, by the expulsion from Oxford of half-a-dozen students supposed to be maintained there at her ladyship's expense, and whose chief crimes consisted in having previously been engaged in humble occupations, meeting in illicit conventicles for the purpose of extemporaneous preaching and prayer, living in college at the charge of persons suspected of enthusiasm, and holding generally the detestable tenets of the sect called Methodists.‡

* "History of Breconshire," ii. 349.

† Morgan, 243.

‡ "Tyerman's Wesley," iii. 33; "Phillips's Life of Whitfield," p. 492.

Writing again to Mr. Harris, May 13, 1768, the Countess says:—"I have sent credit upon my banker to Mr. Wilson for £350; and this in smaller or larger proportions he may draw for. Mr. Ireland will pay the notes in any part of Wales you may wish. I beg your prayers, my dear friends, for support and strength. I am often ready to faint and think I am just going, so very, very ill I am. Great prospects are before us in Kent at present. I begin the chapel at Tunbridge Wells to-morrow, consecrated to that dear Man of Sorrows by the prayers of Trevecca. He will accept those petitions."

The whole undertaking of the College appeared a strange proceeding to others besides those who, as the Countess expressed it, would look at the matter through the natural eye. Even Mr. John Wesley had his misgivings, and in a letter of May 19, 1768, sent to his brother, he asks, "Did you ever see anything more queer than their plan of institution? Pray, who penned it, man or woman?"—an evident sneer at her ladyship, and an enquiry that suggested to Wesley's most admiring biographer the possibility of its being dictated by jealousy.* The Rev. Mr. Berridge was also unfavourable to the project, and in an eccentric letter to her ladyship remarks: "The soil you have chosen is proper. Welsh mountains afford a brisk air for a student; and the rules are excellent; but I doubt the success of the project. Are we commanded to make labourers, or to pray the Lord to *send* labourers."†

The enterprise, however, had its enthusiastic supporters, and when all was approaching completion, the Rev. J. Fletcher, of Madely, was appointed president, and Mr. J. Easterbrook, afterwards Vicar of the Temple and Ordinary of Newgate, a man of deep piety, as resident master. Mr. Easterbrook had spent some time with Mr. Harris at Trevecca in the early part of the year 1768, and in a letter he afterwards wrote from Madely, Feb. 22, he remarked: "I shall not be faithful to the grace of God if I do not inform you that I experienced much of the love of God when among your people."

* Tyerman's Wesley, iii. 35. † "Life and Times of the Countess," ii. 92.

The building was opened as a College "for literary and religious instruction, and the chapel dedicated to the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, on the 24th August, 1768, the anniversary of Lady Huntingdon's birthday, the preacher on the occasion being Mr. Whitfield, who discoursed from the words, 'In all places where I record My name I shall come unto thee and bless thee.' (Ex. xx. 24.) On the following Sunday Mr. Whitfield preached again to some thousands of hearers in the court in front of the building, and altogether enjoyed such a season of refreshing that he remarked, 'What we have seen and felt at the College is unspeakable.'"

The students that were admitted from time to time were drawn from all parts of England and Wales. On the Saturday they would leave the Institution in large numbers in order to preach in various parts of the country, some, for whose accommodation the foundress had provided horses, having to travel considerable distances. Of course amongst about thirty students, the number at one time on the College register, there would be the usual variety as to application and ability; but as all the men were carefully selected—none being allowed to enter but "such as were truly converted to God, and resolved to dedicate themselves to His service," the general result was eminently satisfactory to her ladyship, who saw a trained and noble band of earnest and laborious ministers go forth from her College to do service for God and man in various parts of the country, and in distant parts of the world.

Not the least of the influences that contributed to the formation of the ministerial character of the students was the frequent visits of Mr. Harris. He would converse with and pray for and with the young men, and often preach to large congregations in their hearing. His remarks to the students would doubtless bear upon ministerial work, and amongst other things he would urge them to sink themselves in the glory of their theme, warning them that he who violated this

rule by setting himself up as an object of esteem, regard, or admiration, must be an apostate, a devil, rather than a worthy Christian minister.*

The first anniversary of the College, which was held in August, 1769, was a time of peculiar solemnity on account of the long succession of preaching and other religious services, when "many experienced a spring-time of sensible comfort and joy, and vehement longings after more communion with the Lord." A notable feature of the gathering was the number of distinguished persons, in addition to the Countess and her titled companions, who were present, and the harmony that prevailed notwithstanding the differences of rank and theological opinion. The preachers, amongst whom was the Rev. John Wesley, included exhorters as well as ordained ministers, Nonconformists as well as Churchmen, Calvinists as well as Arminians. But the most remarkable feature of all was the affecting re-union after seventeen years of estrangement between Harris and his former friends, Revs. William Williams, Peter Williams, Howell Davies, and the Rev. Daniel Rowlands of Llangeitho, all of whom were present, and took prominent parts. Mr. Nathanael Rowlands, the great Llangeitho reformer's son, had been present the previous year, namely, at the opening, and had contracted a romantic attachment. He became enamoured of the charms of Miss Harris, the daughter of his father's rival. The affection was by no means reciprocated, as young Rowlands wrote after his return home complaining that her "very countenance even dispised him," which he tells her he thought "a very poor return for the most honourable love that ever possessed the heart of man."†

The reconciliation between Mr. Howell Harris and the Rev. Daniel Rowlands must have been the result of mutual inclination. Mr. Rowlands himself had seen trouble, having been ejected from his curacy at Llangeitho in 1763, on account of

* "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," ii. 104.

† Trevecca MSS.

his Methodism. He had also possibly discovered, after the lapse of so many years, that the difference between him and Mr. Harris was less than he had imagined. But the reconciliation must have been equally if not chiefly due to the friendly and peace-loving disposition of Mr. Harris himself, and probably to his initiative, as it is barely possible that the Countess, who acted in a great measure according to his advice, would ever have invited anyone to the anniversary ceremonial that was not perfectly agreeable to his feelings. Some years previous to the reconciliation, but subsequent to the unhappy rupture, Rowlands had suffered from a dangerous illness. Harris on hearing of it made the following entry in his journal:—"When I came to preach at —, I heard that brother Rowlands was near dying. I felt such love in my spirit towards him as words could not express. Indeed I felt so much that I could lay down my life ten thousand times for him that if it were possible he might be spared. O what union did I in reality feel with his spirit." And now that an opportunity occurs for meeting again after years of distance, the two great men are once more in accord, all jealousy vanished, and Christian charity in the ascendant.

At the second and third anniversaries the crowds attending were larger still than at the first, but the proceedings were on the same lines. There were the same gatherings of students, exhorters, Dissenting ministers, and clergymen; the same prolonged succession of services, the same spirit of piety and brotherly affection, the same tokens of the Divine presence, and the same re-union between Harris and his early associates.

One effect of the reconciliation was to bring Harris again into harmony with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. He never again became an integral portion of their order, much less a prince and a dictator amongst them as formerly; but the chill being removed he is once more a welcome guest at their chapels and large gatherings, and received invitations and even formally signed petitions to give his presence again

at some of their chief assemblies.* One or two instances belonging to this period evince the remains of his former earnestness and authority. When preaching at Capel Newydd in Pembrokeshire, where he had to address the audience from the open window of the chapel on account of the overflow congregations outside, he beheld a young man just beyond the boundary of the burial ground whose conduct was unseemly and distracting. Directing his voice to that particular quarter, Mr. Harris rebuked him so sharply that the delinquent fainted on the spot.† But the old power evoked the old hostility. After preaching in a Welsh village he was followed by a furious mob, and both he and his gig thrown over into a ditch. A young man by the name of Bound, who stood by, felt ashamed of the brutality of his neighbours, assisted Mr. Harris out of the mire, and helped him to repair the vehicle, for which Mr. Harris thanked him most affectionately, and placing his hand on the youth's head invoked the blessing of God to descend upon him. In relating the incident many years later, Mr. Bound expressed his belief that his material wealth and spiritual comfort had all been given in answer to that supplication. ‡

The reconciliation of Harris to his early friends forms the last act necessary to render his Christian fellowship and affection of the most expanded order. He had ever loved them as brethren, but now that outward harmony was restored there is a more palpable foundation for the affectionate compliment bestowed upon him in a letter from his old friend—Mr. James Hutton, in which the latter says, "Your heart is not constrained by any other party, but the party of Jesus Christ."

The letter from which these words are extracted was dated Lindsay House, Chelsea, Oct. 8, 1769. After mentioning the long-standing friendship between Mr. Hutton and Mr. Harris

* Trevecca MSS. † "Methodistiaeth Cymru," ii. 320.

‡ "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 68.

the writer alludes to the re-formation of the Moravian Missionary Society, and informs his friend at Trevecca that he had been proposed as honorary and correspondent member. The heart of Mr. Harris was quick to answer to every appeal for the propagation of the Gospel ; he became a subscriber of five guineas annually to the funds of the society, and was entitled by the terms of his membership to be informed of the Moravian Missionary operations in distant lands. He also kept up a correspondence with other leading Moravians besides Mr. Hutton, such as Boehler, Gambold, Johannes, Spangenberg, Nyberg, and Neissen. Some of these would visit him at Trevecca, and their fellowship was maintained in the highest bonds.

In the "Life and Times of Harris," by the Rev. Edward Morgan, M.A., a letter is inserted without any date, which, judging from its internal evidence, was written about this period to the Countess of Huntingdon. It contains Harris's own apology for the catholicity of spirit and independence of mind which had distinguished his whole course, and in it we behold once again the flickering of his early fire.

" Bath.

" Honourable Lady,

"The constant stream of compassion that continually follows me from every quarter, makes me indeed poor before the Lord, and ashamed of myself. I am sensible that I am prone to go aside to some extreme ; but through amazing grace the Lord never suffers me to go far from His heart, for He is my beloved friend indeed, and to please Him is my greatest delight. I owe Him more love and obedience than any of His servants, but am still an ungrateful sinner. He never had such room to display the freeness of His grace and the infinite depth of His patience and mercy as in me. In Him alone I love and honour all His people and plans. I do not know that I am tempted to idolize or to be blind to the im-

perfections of any, or to warp from my own plan and the post I am persuaded our dear Lord hath given me, the chief indeed of sinners,—too dear to me to entertain any or the least thought of quitting. The abiding love and hope the Lord has implanted in my heart for the Established Church are a sufficient balance were I tempted to some partiality to any that are out of it. For the national work and my immediate cause and work are the same. The room which God has made in my heart for all his people and their various plans is real ; it is not my shame and weakness, but my crown and glory, to be thus far circumcised in heart and to become like Him in His own work. It has cost me a severe humbling before I could rejoice in the success and happiness of all without distinction ; and to be able to take all these just as they are to my heart, as our Saviour takes me, is the fruit of conquest in my spirit. O my dear lady, all His people are our people, and all His work in the hands of all must be ours as being His. He is lovely in all His plans, even amidst all our selfish schemes that mix therewith. Here is a forgiving Saviour to us all, and to me more than all. We must be ever thus poor and humble towards each other, ever loving and forgiving a great deal, as He dealeth with us, being ever glad to find a little of Him among all parties amidst all the rubbish of self. O happy we, when we are the soonest and first to fall at our brother's feet, and overcome evil with good. We have a powerful enemy, whose business and aim is to divide and fill us with jealousy of each other, to break the unity of the spirit, that our mutual help may be hindered, and to misrepresent us to each other, that we may lose that glory of all glories—love, pity, and compassion for each other, whereby the Lord distinguishes us from the world as His accepted followers indeed.

“ To imitate any has never been my weak side or practice knowingly : it is what I have looked on in others with pity. Whoever spoke clearest and strongest of the infinite humiliation of the Son of God in human nature, with the unspeakable

merits of His obedience and sufferings in His life and death, has a particular place in my heart. But the self and partiality I see in us all, that surmounts at times even this acknowledged love, give me pain and prove how little we all know in reality and to purpose. I see the work in the Christian, on taking a nearer view of it, in its infancy as to love and tenderness. It displays some or rather much weakness both as to the instruments and the people. O ! it is well, my dear lady, that we have just such a Saviour as we have, and that we are also under such restraints. I see we are in danger of becoming narrow-minded, in consequence of seeing how partial others are. But O, the amazing wisdom and grace that always appear in Jesus.

“I heard an excellent sermon on Sunday from Mr. Romaine. I discoursed twice in Mr. Wesley’s chapel, and once at Captain Wilson’s ; then went to Frome.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE END

THROUGHOUT many long years of Mr. Harris's ministry, that is, since the year 1774, his wife had been intimately associated with him in every feature of his work; she was devotedly attached to him personally, and deeply sympathized with every feature of the great revival movement. It was therefore an irreparable loss when this excellent partner of his many cares and successes passed away from her earthly labours on March 9th, 1770, and in the fifty-eight year of her age. During her whole wedded life, which was unmarred by any domestic discomfort, she had rendered valuable aid to her husband, and had been the means of edification to all around her; and when the end came she passed away peacefully in the Lord. An elegy composed to her memory speaks of her as of an amiable disposition, as according a hearty welcome to the many pilgrims who resorted to Trevecca from all parts of Wales, discharging with difficulty the onerous duties of her post as domestic head of the large establishment, and as expressing her gratitude in her dying moments for the Providence that united her lot with that of her husband. The esteem in which she was held, as well as the sympathy for Mr. Harris, may be gleaned from the following passages of a letter written to the bereaved husband by the Countess, from Brighton, April 29th, 1770: "Knowing your great dislike to writing, I am doubly obliged by your kind and faithful letter, and not without feeling that kindness for my very dear and highly favoured but departed

friend ; and that in her last but happy moments she should love, pray for and pity me, must show what influence she was under, and also remind my heart deeply hōw much I want for the all of every good ; and being a poor helpless creature, as well as a vile sinful worm before the Lord, I may, as my only qualification, bring more freely all to His feet. I hope both you and your dear daughter will remember all the words of comfort she left behind her for me, as I ever had so peculiar an affection for her ; and the truth and simplicity of heart that ever flowed from her ever engaged an uncommon regard from me to her. My heart is carried often by the Lord to Wales. It will make me doubly happy to contribute one moment to your and dear Betsy's comfort, for none can feel your loss greater than my heart ; and I must add that it bows with thankfulness before the Lord for that kind, that Christian and loving spirit that invites me among you all, and which I shall accept with not less satisfaction. My love to your dear daughter, and united thanks and love to all your precious people ; and tell them I value their prayers more than all the riches of the whole earth, and that I do beg that a good measure pressed down and running over may be conveyed to their own breast by Christ for their charity to me. I believe Lady Ann Erskine and Miss Orton will accompany me. May all the love and compassion of Jesu's heart be explained to you ; as sharing with you in your present great trial.

“ Your obliged friend,

“ S. HUNTINGDON.”

Mr. Harris had the pleasure about this time of another and probably the last visit from his life-long friend Mr. Wesley. The Calvinistic controversy, which in the early years of the revival had been soothed and laid to rest by the timely and skilful mediation of Harris, had now burst forth with tenfold virulence. Mr. Wesley had long since repented the concessions he then made, and confessed that he had unawares

leaned too much towards Calvinism. In the year 1770 he beheld a tendency in some who were called Methodists to urge the doctrine of justification by faith only into an Antinomian channel, and felt called upon to make a pronouncement upon the matter, which was embodied in the celebrated doctrinal minutes of the Wesleyan Conference of that year. The publication of those minutes resulted in a breach of the intimate friendship between Wesley and the Countess of Huntingdon, led to the dismissal of the Rev. Joseph Benson from the mastership of Trevecca College, and the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Fletcher from the position of president, and besides plunging the disputants into a long and bitter controversy, brought about the final separation between the Wesleyan and the Calvinistic sections of the Methodist people.

The part that was taken by Mr. Harris in the dispute was exceedingly small; but such as it was it harmonized perfectly with his life-long practice of endeavouring to act as a balancing power. While retaining his Calvinistic opinions he deprecated the bitterness of some of his own friends, and in particular the heated partisanship of the young men of the College who drove their peculiar views to the most dangerous limit. "I have borne," he said to Mr. Wesley, when the latter visited Trevecca in August, 1772, "I have borne with these pert, ignorant young men, vulgarly called students, till I cannot in conscience bear any longer. They preach barefaced reprobation and so broad Antinomianism that I have been constrained to oppose them to their face, even in the public congregation."* The petulant spirit of the foregoing remark may serve to disenchant those who are perpetually investing the past with a halo. The censure was however justified by Mr. Wesley, for he adds, "It is no wonder that they should preach thus. What better can be expected from raw lads of little understanding, little learning, and no experience?"

* "Life of Wesley," by Tyerman. iii, 128.

The reader will have noticed from the foregoing pages that from a very early period in Mr. Harris's life, from his conversion in fact, when he made an everlasting surrender of himself to God, his innermost experience was such that not only was the dread of eternity gone from his mind, but a panting was created for the realms where undimmed visions of God are enjoyed; and it will have been further observed that the sense of exhaustion, consequent upon his labours and sufferings, at times induced him to believe that the time of his departure was at hand. The strong constitution and well-knit frame with which he was blessed, together with the determination of his mind, enabled him to survive many an effort and many a storm that would have been fatal to men of weaker nature. At length, however, the inexorable demands of the last enemy prove too strong, and Mr. Harris's health, which began to give way from the time his wife died, now visibly declined, and he became subject to severe attacks of an illness which eventually proved fatal.

He continued, as long as he was able, to visit the College; "and the last time he preached there," writes the Countess of Huntingdon, "there was as great a crowd as usual, and his preaching was as searching and rousing as ever. He spake with a mighty sense of God, eternity, the immortality and preciousness of the souls of his hearers; of their original corruption, and of the extreme danger the unregenerate were in, with the nature and absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Ghost, and of believing in Christ in order to our pardon and justification, yielding acceptable obedience, and obtaining salvation from hell and an entrance into heaven. He spake as became the oracles of God in demonstration of the Spirit and power; and especially when he came to his application, he addressed himself to the audience in such a tender, earnest, and moving manner, exciting us to come and be acquainted with the dear Redeemer, as melted the assembly to tears."

During the last weeks of his life he would still come down to preach to and exhort the family, and that also with power, insisting still on having a true and thorough change in the inward man, and speaking much against superficial religion, and receiving the truths of God in the flesh without feeling any true effect on the heart so as to change the spirit and bring the whole man to become one with Christ.

Some detached reflections he penned in his illness, as well as an account of his departure, have been preserved by those who survived him at the Trevecca Institution. "I find," he wrote, "my Saviour's will is my heaven, be it what it may, and have, I think, from Him insatiable cries to go home out of this body to my dear Father, Saviour, and Comforter. O how I loved every word that came from the dear Saviour, and all His dear people that feed on Him, and receive every good thing of Him. I feel my spirit eats His words, and I could wash the feet of His servants. My spirit adored Him for giving me leave to hope for that blessed time to come into His presence; much more for giving me room to hope that my work is done, and that I am at the door, and that I, a poor sinner that have nothing but sin, should lay hold of His righteousness and wisdom and strength, for I have nothing of my own. My spirit is like one at the door waiting to be called in. I could have no access to ask for anything but that I may go home, and that He would make haste and make no long tarrying.

"I love all that come and feed on His flesh and blood. I feel that He and not anything here is my rest and happiness; I love eternity because He is there; I speak with and cry to Him. O the thickness of this flesh which hides Him from me; it is indeed lawful to be weary of it, for it is a thick veil of darkness, and I feel clearly it is this that makes me weary of everything here and longing to go home to my dear Saviour. O Thou who didst bleed to death and who art alive, come and take me home; and as for the passage, I have committed

that to Thee to take care of me. I am thine here and for ever ; I am one of Thy redeemed, the fruit of Thy blood and sweat, and Thy will is my heaven.

“ I feel my spirit continually as it were from home, and that I am one of the Lamb's company and belong to Him, and can't be long from Him. My spirit cries, Lord, Thou canst not be God and not pity and love me, because Thou hast given me what Thou hast promised in pity to a poor, broken, penitent, and humbled spirit, and also faith to lay hold of Thy righteousness and blood. O Lord, Thou canst not leave me long here ; Thou must pity and call me home, for I am a stranger here. I love the glorified spirits, and long to be among them, because they behold His glory, and because they have no guile, nor deceit, nor self, nor strange gods, nor any other corruption, nor wisdom or righteousness, but only in the Lamb.

“ I find myself going very weak to-day ; and am in much pain, and feel my spirit crying, O my dear Father, art Thou coming to strike the last stroke ? When our Saviour shall come and raise my spirit from nature and death and everything here below to His own Spirit, then shall I know what it is to be cleansed and purified. I feel that my spirit goes to God not as His creature, but as His child and the purchase of His blood.

“ My dear Saviour did shine on me sweetly this afternoon. O let me eat no more the bread that perisheth, but be Thou to me from henceforth my bread and food for ever ; be Thou to me my Sun, and let me see this no more. O hear the cries of Thy poor worm ; Thy blood has done the work,—take me from this body of clay, for I am here in prison ; O take me there, where Thou showest Thy glory, and indulge a worm sick of love longing to come home. I adore Thee for all the graces bestowed on all the spirits round Thy throne, and especially on my own poor spirit. And as for my concerns and cares, I have none but Thine, and Thou must take care of

them ; call me hence and make no longer tarrying. I cried again, If I am not willing to be clothed with Thy righteousness, then do not hear me ; and if Thy blood does not overbalance all my sins, then do not hear me ; and if my work is not done, and if it is not Thy will I should come home, do not hear me ; for what am I, a worm before Thee ! I then cried and prayed for the whole race of mankind, loving them all, but more especially for this little family which he has given me, intreating Him that He would be in the midst of them, and reveal Himself unto them as crucified before them, and banish every spirit from them but His own."

"I said, I have no name worthy of preserving to posterity but only as far as it is connected with Thine, and that I leave to Thee. I love this body because Thou hast made it, and hast united it to Thyself, and I give it to Thee to be embaled in the earth where thine was laid. I call upon Thee as a child does upon his dear Father ; and I weep over all the sin of the world, especially over that sin that Thy blood and sufferings are despised."

"I feel my spirit leaving all places and men here below, and going to my Father, and to my native country, home, yea my own home. And though I am here below in His kingdom, yet whilst I wait to be called home my longings and cries are insatiable indeed. And when the Lord of Glory answers me that I shall soon go to Him, my spirit does so burn with love to that dear Saviour that I flee to Him and can take no denial. I can't stay here, and though I am but a bit of dust and nothing before Thee, yet O Father, may I without offending Thee ask this one special favour : O Saviour, give me leave though a worm to ask without offending that my time be shortened. O my dear Lord, I must love Thee, and weep at Thy feet, and wrestle with Thee till Thou appearest unto me. This is Thy lower house, and Thou art my life and all here below ; that is Thy upper house, and Thou art gone before me, and therefore I must come. Thou can'st not leave me long ; Thou art both here and there also my heaven."

"I must have the Saviour, indeed, for He is my all. All that others have in the world and in religion and in themselves I have in Thee,—pleasures, riches, safety, honour, life, righteousness, holiness, wisdom, bliss, joy, gaiety, and happiness; and by the same rule that each of these is dear to others He must be dear to me. And if a child longs for his father, a traveller for the end of his journey, a workman to finish his work, a prisoner for liberty, an heir for the full possession of his estate; so in all these respects I can't help longing to go home."

"My spirit rejoices within me in seeing that He that made me will call me hence; and it is indeed weary of all things here, having all kinds of answers and confirmations from the Holy Spirit relating to my approaching departure. Lord, this is Thy house and not mine; I built it for Thee and not for myself; and the family I have in it is Thine. For Thee I nurse them; and the papers which I leave behind me are written for Thee and not for my use. And seeing all in this light I feel it is easy to part with all; my spirit therefore crieth continually 'O come, come, Lord, come quickly; I feel my spirit among the suppliants here before the throne, and find freedom to say, I have done my work, I have finished my testimony, I have run my race; what more remains for me to do, but to come home to my own dear God, and Father, and Friend, and best relation. All Thy friends are my friends; and all Thy enemies are mine. O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and take me home to rest.'"

Mr. Harris was now confined by his disorder to his bed, and was unable to write; but he still continued his testimony. "Blessed be God," he said, "my work is done, and I know that I am going to my dear God and Father, for He hath my heart, yea, my whole heart. Though the enemy is permitted to torment my body, blessed be the Lord, he is not suffered to come near my spirit." "Very often," remark his first biographers, "he joyfully repeated these words, 'Glory be to God, death hath no sting.' And again he broke out, as one

full of faith and assurance, 'It is more clear to me that God is my everlasting Father, and that I shall go to him soon.' He over and over again expressed how exceeding dear and precious the Saviour was to him, and said, 'This is following Jesus : we are come to Mount Zion. I saw great glory before in that God-Man Jesus, but nothing to what I now behold in Him.' At another time, when he awoke from a slumber through the extreme pain of his body, his spirit leaping within him as a prisoner coming to liberty, thinking this the last stroke, he cried out, 'O Jesus, here I come, here I come to Thee.' Sometime afterward he expressed his faith, and longing desires to depart, saying, 'I am in great pain, but all is well, all his well, He hath settled all things well. O how would it be if the sting of death had not been taken away. O that I could now go home, for my work here is done.' Breathing out his soul in similar strains he went home to God, July 21, 1773, in the 60th year of his age. "Many more divine sayings came from him just before he departed, which were not taken down, whereby he testified his great love to precious souls and the concern he was in about them."

When the information spread with the rapidity of fire throughout the country that Mr. Harris was dead, the land seemed to mourn with a great lamentation. Everybody felt that a great man had fallen, and the country for a wide compass disgorged itself of its population who were anxious to be present at the closing scene. The Countess of Huntingdon records her impressions of the event in the following terms : "On the day Mr. Harris was interred we had some special seasons of Divine influence both upon converted and unconverted. It was a day never to be forgotten, but I think ought to be remembered with holy wonder and gratitude by all who were present. No fewer than twenty thousand people were assembled on this solemn occasion ; and we had abundance of students in the College, and all the ministers and exhorters who collected from various parts to pay their last tribute of

respect to the remains of a great man. We had three stages erected, and nine sermons addressed to the vast multitudes, hundreds of whom were dissolved in tears. Fifteen clergymen were present, six of whom blew the Gospel trumpet with great power and freedom. Though we had enjoyed much of the gracious presence of God in our assemblies before, yet I think I never saw so much at any time as on that day; especially when the Lord's supper was administered, God poured out His Spirit in a wonderful manner. Many old Christians told me they had never seen so much of the glory of the Lord and the riches of His grace, nor felt so much of the Gospel before."*

When the long and mournful procession arrived at the parish church at Talgarth, the service was to have been conducted according to the rites of the Church of England; but amidst the sorrow and tears of the audience that thronged the building an interruption took place; the officiating clergyman being unable to proceed on account of his emotion, handed the prayer-book to another; but the second clergyman also lost self-control and passed the book to a third, when he again by reason of the same cause was unable to go on; and thus in silence were the remains of the great man laid to rest in the chancel of the parish church at Talgarth, and in the same grave in which his wife had been buried a few years before.

A monumental tablet erected by his daughter, and placed in a conspicuous position near the communion table in Talgarth Church, but now removed to another part of the building to make way for improvements, was within living memory an indication of the spot where the saintly reformer was buried. The tablet bears the following inscription:—

* "Life of Harris," by Morgan, p. 271.

Near the Communion Table lie the remains of
 HOWELL HARRIS, ESQUIRE ;

Born at Trevecca, January 23rd, 1714.

Here, where his body lies, he was convinced of sin,
 Had his pardon sealed,
 Felt the power of Christ's precious blood
 At the Holy Communion.

Having tasted grace himself, he resolved to declare to others
 What God had done for his soul.

He was the first itinerant Preacher of Redemption
 In this period of Revival in England and Wales.

He preached the Gospel
 For the space of thirty-nine years,
 Till he was taken to his final Rest.
 He received those who sought Salvation
 Into his house.

Then sprang up the Family at Trevecca,
 To whom he faithfully ministered unto his end,
 As an indefatigable servant of God
 And a faithful member of the Church of England.
 His end

Was more blessed than his beginning.

Looking to Jesus crucified,
 He rejoiced to the last that death had lost its sting.
 He fell asleep in Jesus at Trevecca, July 21st, 1773,
 And now rests blessedly from all his Labours.

Under the same stone lie also the remains of his late wife
 ANNE HARRIS,

Daughter of JOHN WILLIAMS, of Skreen, Esquire,
 Who departed this life March 9th, 1770, aged 58.
 She loved the Lord Jesus, relied on His redeeming
 Grace and Blood, and with her last breath declared
 Her confidence in Him.

They left one beloved daughter, the constant object of
 Their prayers and cares,
 And who honours their venerable memory.

With regard to the disposal of Mr. Harris's property, it is said by the Rev. E. Morgan,* "That he assigned to his only daughter an apartment in the house at Trevecca, should she at any time be disposed to reside there. But as by her mother's fortune she was rendered independent of him, and thus sufficiently provided for, he bequeathed by his last will the whole of his possessions, hereditary and accumulated, to the maintenance of the Institution for ever on the strict principles of its foundation. He appointed two trustees, with directions for replacing them, who were to live in the house, to receive the earnings of the people, conduct the pecuniary management, attend the devotional services, and in every respect look to that plenary authority which he himself had preserved."

The aspersion cast upon Mr. Harris that he went about robbing the poor in order to enrich himself, has been fully disposed of by our previous references to those benefactions through which he would often reduce himself to the verge of distress. That other calumny, that he received people into his house and confiscated their property for the benefit of his daughter, is amply refuted by the terms of his will, which was such that even the prejudiced Theophilus Jones regarded it as hardly doing justice to his own child.

Miss Harris, however, had no occasion for the apartment at Trevecca. She had left the place previous to her father's death, and had settled at Brecon, as the wife of Dr. Prichard, who was bailiff of Brecon in the years 1776, 1787, and 1797. "The Carmarthen Journal," of February 24, 1826, contained a reference to her decease :—"Died on the 8th instant, at Brecon, Mrs. Elizabeth Prichard, aged 77, a widow of the late Charles Prichard, Esq., surgeon, and one of the Common Councilmen of that Borough, and mother of Major Prichard of the Royal 56th Regiment or Pompadours,

* "Life and Times of Howell Harris, Esq.," p. 272.

lately stationed in the Isle of France.* She was the only child of Howell Harris, Esq., of Trevecca, formerly a celebrated minister of the Gospel. Her last moments were those of the resigned Christian; and she appeared to leave this world in perfect peace with her Maker, regretted by a numerous circle of friends, and followed by the prayers of the poor to whom too she was an unaffected benefactor."

A respected correspondent informs us that there are people now living in Brecon who recollect Mrs. Prichard very well, and who affirm that during the latter period of her life she manifested a leaning towards Roman Catholicism. It is well known she used to express her great abhorrence of the Puritanical views of her father. The strictness of the rigid life to which she had to submit at Trevecca in her early days found such a reaction that any reference to the tenets of her father were to her in her old days of a revolting character."

While the motives of Mr. Howell Harris in founding the Institution at Trevecca have been fully explained, his foresight in his last bequest is open to question. He devised the whole of his property for the maintenance of the Establishment "for ever;" but scarcely had seventy years of that interminable period rolled by, in fact before the close of the fourth decade of the present century, the spirit of the Founder had vanished from the place, and the Institute itself had dwindled down to the ignoble proportions of a small country shop.

The Calvinistic Methodists of the Principality having by this time developed into a large and powerful denomination, were sorely in need of a theological seminary distinctively their own. The Methodists of North Wales had already made provision for the training of their ministers by establishing a college at Bala in 1738; and when the need became pressing

* Major Prichard, we are informed, was either Dr. Prichard's nephew, or his son by a former marriage and not by Elizabeth, daughter of Howell Harris, as stated above. It is recorded on the monumental tablet in the Priory Church, Brecon, that Dr. Prichard was *twice* married.

in the counties of the South, the eyes of all were naturally directed to the stately old fabric at Trevecca. Arrangements were accordingly made with the remaining trustees, and from the year 1842 the building has been utilized as a Theological College. Since that time a succession of trained ministers have gone forth from the College to further consolidate and extend the Denomination, which to this day remains a durable monument to the memory of its founder,—that founder who as a youth went forth in flame to charge single-handed the iniquities of high and low, and who, while he did so, not from the safe elevation of a rostrum, but to the faces and in the midst of his foes, found his greatest protection in his own daring and in the arm of God.

THE END.

